

# THE SEXUAL REVOLUTION

TOWARD A SELF-GOVERNING CHARACTER STRUCTURE

*By*

WILHELM REICH

*Translated by*

THEODORE P. WOLFE



ORGONE INSTITUTE PRESS

NEW YORK · 1945

COPYRIGHT, 1945  
ORGONE INSTITUTE PRESS, INC.  
400 EAST 57TH STREET, NEW YORK 22, N. Y.

*This volume is a translation of*  
DIE SEXUALITÄT IM KULTURKAMPF

PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

The Editor of *Katushka* raises the question, "What do we live for?" Perhaps he wants to get into far-flung discussions of philosophy. Perhaps, also, he is seized by a fear of the insignificance of human life. If the former is the case, all right. If the latter should be the case, that would be bad. For this reason: "Living in order to live" is the only answer to the question, no matter how strange and one-sided it may sound. The whole meaning of life is life itself, the process of living. In order to comprehend the meaning of life one must, first of all, love life, must become completely submerged in it. Only then will one comprehend the meaning of life, will one understand what one lives for. Life,—in contradistinction to all man has created—is something that requires no theory. Whoever is able to function in life will need no theory of life.

FROM THE DIARY OF THE STUDENT KOSTYA RYABTSEV

Since it is not for us to create a plan for the future that will hold for all time, all the more surely, what we contemporaries have to do is the uncompromising critical evaluation of all that exists, uncompromising in the sense that our criticism fears neither its own results nor the conflict with the powers that be.

KARL MARX

# CONTENTS

PREFACE TO THIRD EDITION	xi
PREFACE TO SECOND EDITION	xvii

## PART I

### THE FIASCO OF SEXUAL MORALISM

I. THE CLINICAL BASIS OF SEX-ECONOMIC CRITICISM	3
1. From moral regulation to sex-economic regulation	3
2. A contradiction in Freud's cultural philosophy	10
3. Secondary impulses and moral regulation	21
4. Sex-economic "morality"	25
II. THE FAILURE OF CONSERVATIVE SEXUAL REFORM	30
III. THE INSTITUTION OF MARRIAGE AS THE BASIS OF CONTRADICTIONS IN SEXUAL LIFE	34
IV. THE INFLUENCE OF CONSERVATIVE SEXUAL MORALITY	40
1. "Objective, non-political" science	40
2. Marital morality as the inhibiting factor in any kind of sexual reform	51
a) Helene Stöcker	51
b) Auguste Forel	57
c) The end of the World League for Sexual Reform	59
3. The blind alley of sex education	61
V. THE AUTHORITARIAN FAMILY AS EDUCATIONAL APPARATUS	71
1. The influence of social ideology	73
2. The triangle structure	75
VI. THE PROBLEM OF PUBERTY	80
1. The conflict of puberty	80



2. Social demand and sexual reality	84
a) Workers' youth	87
b) Upper middle class youth	91
3. Some medical, non-ethical considerations of the sex life of youth	102
a) Sexual abstinence in puberty	103
b) Masturbation	109
c) The sexual intercourse of adolescents	111
VII. COMPULSIVE MARRIAGE AND LASTING SEXUAL RELATIONSHIP	116
1. The lasting sexual relationship	119
2. The problem of marriage	129
a) The social function of marriage	131
b) The inherent contradiction in the institution of marriage	142

## PART II

### THE STRUGGLE FOR THE "NEW LIFE" IN THE SOVIET UNION

A NECESSARY PREAMBLE	153
VIII. THE "ABOLITION OF THE FAMILY"	157
IX. THE SEXUAL REVOLUTION	164
1. Progressive legislation	164
2. Warning voices from among the workers	169
X. THE INHIBITION OF THE SEXUAL REVOLUTION	180
1. The background of the inhibition	180
2. Moralizing instead of comprehension and practical mastery	184
3. Objective causes of the inhibition	191
XI. LIBERATION OF BIRTH CONTROL AND HOMOSEXUALITY, AND SUBSEQUENT INHIBITION	196
XII. THE INHIBITION IN THE YOUTH COMMUNES	212
1. Revolutionary youth	212

2. Youth communes	214
a) The commune Sorokin	217
b) The work commune Bolshevo for delinquents	221
c) Youth in search of new forms of living	222
d) The insoluble conflict between family and commune	227
3. Indispensable structural prerequisites	232
XIII. SOME PROBLEMS OF INFANTILE SEXUALITY	235
1. The creation of a collective structure	236
2. The creation of a non-authoritarian structure in the child	240
3. Sham-revolutionary, pastoral education	247
4. Again the problem of delinquency	253
XIV. THE LESSONS OF THE SOVIET STRUGGLE FOR A "NEW LIFE"	260

## PREFACE TO THIRD EDITION

The present third edition of my book, *DIE SEXUALITÄT IM KULTURKAMPF* (first edition 1930, second, enlarged edition, 1936), appears first in the English language, thanks to the indefatigable efforts of Dr. Theodore P. Wolfe. Previous editions had not been translated into English. It is unchanged as far as the material is concerned. It has required, however, a good deal of change in *terminology*, for the following reasons:

The material for this book was originally gathered, between the years of 1918 and 1935, in the framework of the European freedom movement. This movement was caught in the erroneous belief that an authoritarian ideology was synonymous with the life process of the "bourgeoisie" and that a freedom ideology was synonymous with the life process of the "proletariat." This basic fallacy was the downfall of the European freedom movement. The social happenings of the past 12 years have provided a bloody lesson for the correction of this fallacy. They showed that authoritarian ideology and freedom ideology have nothing to do with economic class boundaries. The ideology of a social stratum is not an immediate reflection of its economic situation. The emotional and mystical excitations of the masses of people are of equal, not to say far greater significance for the social process than the purely economic interests. Authoritarian compulsion permeates *all* strata of society, of all nations, as does thinking and acting in the direction of freedom. There are no class boundaries as far as character structure is concerned as there are boundaries of social or economic position. It is not a matter of "class struggles" between proletariat and bourgeoisie, as a mechanistic theoretical sociology would make us believe. No: working individuals with a character structure capable of freedom fight working individuals with an authoritarian structure,

and parasites of society; members of the higher social strata with a freedom structure fight, at the risk of their existence, for the rights of *all* working individuals against the dictators who, by the way, arise from the proletariat. Soviet Russia, which owes its existence to a proletarian revolution, is today, in 1944, sex-politically reactionary, while America, with its background of a bourgeois revolution, is at least progressive, sex-politically. The social concepts of the 19th century, with their purely economic definition, no longer apply to the ideological stratification we see in the cultural struggles of the 20th century. The social struggles of today, to reduce it to the simplest formula, are between the interests *safeguarding and affirming life* on the one hand, and the interests *destroying and suppressing life* on the other. The basic social question is no longer, "Are you rich or poor?" It is: "Do you favor, and do you fight for, the safeguarding of and the greatest possible freedom of human life? Do you do, in a practical way, everything in your power to make the masses of working individuals so independent in their thinking, acting, and living that the complete self-regulation of human life will become a matter of course in a not too distant future?"

If the basic social question is thus concretely formulated, then it goes without saying that what becomes the focus of social endeavor is the living functioning of every member of society, including the poorest. In this connection, the significance which, over 15 years ago, I had to ascribe to social sexual suppression, assumes gigantic proportions. Social and individual sex-economy has proved the suppression of infantile and adolescent sex life to be the basic mechanism by which character structures supporting political, ideological and economic serfdom are produced. It is no longer a matter of presenting a white, a yellow, a red or a black party membership card to prove this or that or the other mentality. It is a question of fully affirming, of aiding and safeguarding, the free and healthy life manifestations of the newborn, of children, adolescents, women and men, in an unmistakable manner *which forever excludes any social fraud*—or of suppressing and ruining them, no matter with what ideology or

alibi, whether in the interest of this or that state, whether "proletarian" or "capitalistic," for this or that religion, whether Jewish, Christian or Buddhist. This is true everywhere and as long as there is life, and must be recognized if one is to put an end to the organized defraudation of the masses of working individuals, if one wishes to prove in action that one takes one's democratic ideals seriously.

The necessity of a radical change in conditions of sexual living has already permeated general social thinking and continues to do so at an accelerating pace. An understanding attention to infantile love life is spreading in ever wider circles. True, any social, practical affirmation of adolescent love life is still practically absent; true, official educational science shrinks from touching the "hot potato" presented by the sexual problem of puberty; nevertheless, the idea that adolescent sexual intercourse is a natural and matter-of-course demand no longer appears as horrendous as it did when I first presented it in 1929. The success enjoyed by sex-economy in so many countries is due to the many good educators and understanding parents to whom the sexual needs of children and adolescents appear as completely natural and justified. True, there is still the shame of medieval sexual legislation and such atrocious institutions as reformatories; but the rational thought of infantile and adolescent sex life has gained ground irrevocably.

A new period of rationalism will have to hold its own against the powerful remnants of medieval irrationalism. True, there are still the exponents of "hereditary degeneration" and of "congenital criminality"; but the realization of the *social* causation of crime and of emotional disease is becoming more and more widespread. True, there still are only too many physicians who advocate such measures as tying infants' hands to keep them from masturbating; but opposing voices make themselves heard even in daily newspapers. True, healthy adolescents are still being sent to the reformatory because they fulfil their natural love function; but there are more and more judges who know that such legislation and such institutions are social crimes. True, there is still

ample clerical moralism and prying which condemns natural sexuality as the work of the devil; but there is an increasing number of theological students who do social work and rid themselves of their moralism. There are even bishops who advocate contraception, even though they wish to see it restricted to legal marriage. True, many too many young people still suffer shipwreck in their difficult struggle for happiness in love; but it already happens that a father, in a public radio discussion, is taken to task for condemning his daughter for having a child without being legally married. True, there are still compulsive marriage laws which make it possible to make divorce an affair of blackmail; but the disgust with such laws and such divorce proceedings grows apace and becomes more and more general.

What we are living through is a genuine, deep-reaching revolution of cultural living. It takes place without parades, uniforms, drums or cannon salutes; but its victims are no fewer than those of a battle in the civil wars of 1848 or 1917. The senses of the animal, man, for his natural life functions are awakening from a sleep of thousands of years. The revolution in our life goes to the roots of our emotional, social and economic existence.

Particularly the revolutions in *family life*, this emotional Achilles heel of society, take place in a chaotic manner. They are chaotic because our authoritarian family structure, taken over from the old patriarchy, is shaken in its foundations and in the process of giving way to a better, *natural* family form, and because society fails to give protection to this process. This book does not argue with natural familial relationships, but it does attack the *authoritarian* compulsive forms of the family which are maintained by rigid laws, the reactionary human character structure and by an irrational public opinion. The happenings in Soviet Russia in the course of the social revolution after 1917 which are discussed in the second part of this book demonstrate the emotionally and socially dangerous character of these revolutions. The crisis of the family, which Soviet Russia tried to solve in a short span of time in the '20's, now takes place all over the world, much more slowly, but also much more thoroughly. When I speak

of a "deep-reaching revolution of our cultural living" I mean primarily the *replacement of the patriarchal-authoritarian family by the natural form of the family*. But it is precisely this natural form of the relationships between man and wife and between parents and children which still meets the most dangerous social obstacles.

The word *revolutionary* in this book, as in other sex-economic writings, does not mean the use of dynamite, but the use of truth; it does not mean secret meetings and the distribution of illegal literature, but open and public appeal to human conscience, without reservations, circumlocutions and alibis; it does not mean political gangsterism, executions, appointments, making and breaking of pacts; it means revolutionary in the sense of being radical, that is, of *going to the roots of things*. Sex-economy is revolutionary in the sense of the revolutions which were brought about in medicine by the discovery of the microbes and of unconscious psychic life, in technic by the discovery of the laws of mechanics and of electricity, in economics by the discovery of the nature of the productive power, working power. Sex-economy is revolutionary because it discloses the laws of human character formation and because it bases human striving for freedom on the functional laws of biological energy instead of on freedom slogans. We are revolutionary in approaching the life process with the methods of *natural science*, instead of approaching it mystically, mechanistically or politically. The discovery of the cosmic orgone energy which functions in living organisms as biological energy gives our social endeavors a solid foundation in natural science.

The social development of our times, everywhere, is in the direction of an *internationalism without any ifs and whens*. The rule over peoples by politicians must be replaced by a scientific guidance of social processes. What matters is human society, and not the state. What matters is truth, and not tactics. Natural science is confronted with its biggest task ever: that of finally and definitively taking over the responsibility for the future of a tortured humanity. Politics has definitely played out. Natural scientists, whether they want to or not, are called upon to guide

*social processes, and the politicians will have to learn, willy-nilly, to do useful work. To help the new, rational scientific order of life, for which so many are struggling everywhere, to break through, is one of the tasks of this volume. He who, in the sense of living functioning, is decent and is conscious of social responsibility, can and will not misunderstand or misuse it.*

*November, 1944.*

W. R.



## PREFACE TO SECOND EDITION

In October, 1935, three hundred well-known psychiatrists called on the world to reflect. Italy had just invaded Abyssinia. Thousands of people, among them women and children, had been slain. One began to get an idea of the proportions of mass murder in the case of a new world war.

That a nation like the Italian, where masses of people were starving, would follow the call to the colors with enthusiasm and without rebellion was to be expected; nevertheless, the fact was not understandable. It confirmed the general impression that not only is the world ruled in some places by individuals in whom the psychiatrists could not fail to detect signs of mental derangement; more, the people of all parts of the world are ill: their reactions are abnormal, are in conflict with people's own desires and actual possibilities. These are signs of abnormal reactions: to starve in the presence of abundance; to be exposed to cold, rain and snow in the presence of coal, building machinery and ample building space; to believe that a divine power with a long white beard governs everything and that one is at the mercy of this power, for good or evil; to murder innocent people with enthusiasm and to believe to have to conquer a country of which one never had heard before; to go in rags and at the same time feel oneself the representative of the "greatness of the nation"; to forget what a politician promised before he became leader of the nation; to delegate to any individuals, though they be statesmen, almost absolute power over one's life and fate; to be unable to conceive of the fact that the so-called great helmsmen of the state, too, have to sleep, eat, answer the call of nature, that they, too, are governed by unconscious, uncontrollable emotional drives and have their sexual disturbances like any ordinary mortal; to consider the beating of children in the interest of "culture"

a matter of course; to deny to adolescents, people in the prime of their lives, the happiness of the sexual union. One could go on exemplifying indefinitely.

The manifesto of the three hundred psychiatrists was a pragmatic action on the part of science which usually considers itself unpragmatic. But this action was incomplete. Though it described the phenomena correctly, it did not go to their roots. It did not ask the question as to the *nature* of the general disease of the human beings of today. It did not ask why the masses manifest such a boundless readiness to self-sacrifice in the interest of a few armament industrialists. It did not state the difference between the actual gratification of needs and the illusory gratification provided by nationalistic enthusiasm, a gratification which is closely related to the ecstatic states of religious fanatics. Hunger and misery of the masses, together with increasing production, instead of leading to a rational planned economy, led to the affirmation of hunger and pauperization on the part of the masses themselves. The socialist movement lost momentum. The problem here is not the psychology of the statesmen but that of the masses.

The statesmen of today are friends, brothers, cousins or fathers-in-law of magnates of finance. The fact that the mass of thinking, of educated people does not see this and act accordingly, is a problem in itself. It cannot be solved by "psychodiagnostic tests" of individuals. Mental disturbances, among them those of impairment of rational thinking, resignation, submission to authority and Führers, are, reduced to the simplest formula, an expression of a disturbed harmony in vegetative life, specifically, in sexual life, as it is brought about by an authoritarian society.

The grotesque symptoms of the insane are nothing but exaggerations of such mystical and credulous attitudes as are displayed by whole peoples when they try to ward off wars by means of prayer. In the mental hospitals of the world, which house about four out of every 1000 people, no more attention is paid to the regulation of the vegetative sexual life than in politics. Official science has to this day left the chapter **SEXUALITY**

unwritten. Nevertheless, the causation of abnormal psychic reactions by misdirected and unsatisfied sexual energy can no longer be doubted. To raise the question as to *the social regulation of human sex life*, therefore, means to go to the roots of the psychic mass illness.

It is sexual energy which governs the structure of human feeling and thinking. "Sexuality" (physiologically speaking, the parasympathetic function), is the life energy *per se*. Its suppression means disturbance of fundamental life functions, not only in the medical field, but quite generally. The most important social expression of this fact is irrational human action, mysticism and religiosity, readiness to engage in wars, etc. The starting point of sexual politics, therefore, must be the question, *What is the reason for the suppression of human love life?*

Let us briefly summarize the sex-economic concepts of the relationship between human psychology and socio-economic factors. Society forms, alters and suppresses human needs; in this process, human structure is formed. This structure is not inborn, but develops in each individual in the course of the struggle between need and society. There is no congenital structure of the impulses; this structure is acquired in the course of the first few years of life. What is congenital is merely a larger or smaller amount of vegetative energy. Authoritarian society creates the structure of the serf who obeys and rebels at one and the same time. A non-authoritarian society will want to produce "free" people. Therefore, it will have to know not only how the structure of the authoritarian individual was brought about, but what forces must be utilized in order to create a non-authoritarian structure.

Since the core of psychic functioning is the sexual function, the core of practical psychology can be nothing but sexual politics. This is reflected in literature and the film: 90% of all novels and 99% of all films and plays are productions whose appeal is to unsatisfied sexual needs.

The biological needs, the need for food and sexual gratification, determine the necessity of social organization in general. The resulting "modes of production" alter the basic needs, without

abolishing them, and thus create needs of a new kind. The altered and newly created needs in turn determine the further development of production, of the means of production (machines and tools), and with that the social and economic interpersonal relationships. On the basis of these interpersonal relationships of production there develop certain concepts of life, morals, philosophy, etc. These concepts roughly correspond to the stage of technical development at any given time, that is, to the ability to comprehend and master human existence. The social "ideology" thus developed in turn forms human structure. In this way, it becomes a material power; it exists in the human structure in the form of what is called "tradition." The further development depends entirely on whether society as a whole participates in the production of the social ideology, or whether only a minority does so. If a minority has political power, it also has the power to form general ideology and structure. Consequently, in authoritarian society, the thinking of the majority of people corresponds to the interests of the political and economic rulers. In a true democracy, a work-democracy, on the other hand, where there are no power interests of a minority, the social ideology would correspond to the life interests of *all* members of society.

Heretofore, social ideology has been thought of as the mere sum of concepts about the economic process as they formed "in the heads of people." Now, after the victory of the political reaction in Germany, and after what the irrational behavior of the masses has taught us, ideology can no longer be regarded as a mere reflection. As soon as an ideology has taken root in the structure of people and has altered it, it has become a *material political power*. There is no socio-economic process of historical significance which is not anchored in the psychic structure of the masses and which does not express itself in the mode of behavior of the masses. There is no such thing as a "development of productive powers *per se*"; there is only a development of inhibition of human structure, feeling and thinking on the basis of socio-economic processes. The economic process, that is, the development of the machines, is functionally identical with the process

of psychic structure in the people who create the economic process, who further or inhibit it and who are influenced by it. Economy without active emotional human structure is inconceivable; so is human feeling, thinking and acting without economic basis. One-sided neglect of one or the other leads to *psychologism* ("Only the psychic human forces make history") as well as to *economism* ("Only technical development makes history"). Instead of talking so much about dialectics, one should try to comprehend the living mutual relationships between groups of people, nature and machines. They function as a unity, and at the same time mutually condition each other. Certainly, it will not be possible to master the present cultural process unless one comprehends the fact that the core of the psychic structure is the sexual structure, and that the cultural process is essentially determined by sexual needs.

The small, miserable, allegedly "unpolitical" sexual life must be studied in connection with the problems of authoritarian society. Politics does not take place at the diplomats' luncheon but in this everyday life. Social consciousness in everyday living, therefore, is indispensable. If the 1,800 millions inhabitants of the world understood the activities of the leading hundred diplomats, everything would be all right. Then, society and human needs would no longer be governed according to armament interests and political exigency. But these 1,800 millions of people will not be able to master their own fate until they become conscious of their own modest personal lives. What keeps them from doing so are the two inner powers of *sexual moralism* and *religious mysticism*.

The economic order of the past 200 years has changed human structure considerably. Yet, this change is insignificant compared to the comprehensive human impoverishment brought about by thousands of years of suppression of natural living, particularly of natural sexuality. It is only this suppression over thousands of years which has created the mass-psychological soil of fear of authority and submission to it, of incredible humility on the one side and sadistic brutality on the other, and by which the capi-

talist order of the past 200 years has been able to exist. The fact should not be forgotten, though, that it was socio-economic processes which, thousands of years ago, initiated this change in human structure. It is no longer, then, a problem of a machine industry of 200 years' standing, but of a human structure of about 5,000 years' standing, a structure which thus far has proved incapable of putting the machines to its service. As magnificent and revolutionary as the discovery of the laws of capitalist economy was, it alone is insufficient to solve the problem of human submission to authority. True, there are groups of people and fractions of suppressed classes everywhere who fight for "bread and freedom," but the overwhelming majority of people stand back and pray, or they try to fight for freedom on the side of their suppressors. The masses experience the fact of dire need every hour of the day. The fact that one is ready to give them bread only and not all the pleasures in life, makes them only all the more undemanding. What freedom really is or could be, nobody has as yet told the masses concretely. One has not tangibly explained to them the possibilities of general happiness in life. Where this was attempted, it was done in terms of pathological, guilt-laden and shoddy amusements. The core of happiness in life is *sexual* happiness. Nobody of any political importance has ever dared to point this out. The statement was made, instead, that sexuality was a private matter and had nothing to do with politics. The political reaction thinks otherwise!

The French translator of my book, GESCHLECHTSREIFE, ENTHALTSAAMKEIT, EHEMORAL (LA CRISE SEXUELLE, Paris, 1934), compares Freudo-Marxism with Marxism and says that the specific psychoanalytic way of thinking changes the Marxist formulations. "Reich," he writes, "does not consider the sexual crisis primarily a result of the conflict between declining capitalism and new social tendencies, the new proletarian morality, but as the result of the conflict between the natural, eternal sexual needs and the capitalist social order." Such objections are always instructive and lead to more precise and inclusive formulations.

The critic here makes the distinction between class difference

on the one hand and conflict between need and society on the other. Yet, these two opposites should be seen not merely in their antithesis; they are both to be explained on the same basis. True, seen from an objective class point of view, the sexual crisis is an expression of the conflict between capitalist decline and revolutionary ascendancy. But at the same time it is the expression of the conflict between sexual need and mechanistic society. How do these two things go together? Objectively the sexual crisis is a manifestation of class difference; but how does it manifest itself subjectively? What is this "new proletarian morality"? Capitalist class morality is *against* sexuality and thus creates the conflict in the first place. The revolutionary movement eliminates the conflict by first creating a *sex-affirmative* ideology and then giving it practical forms by legislation and a new order of sexual living. That is, authoritarian social order and social sexual suppression go hand in hand, and revolutionary "morality" and gratification of the sexual needs go together. "New revolutionary morality" in itself means nothing; it becomes concrete only by the fact of orderly gratification of the needs, not only in the sexual realm. Unless revolutionary ideology recognizes the fact that this is its main concrete content it remains empty talk, in conflict with the real facts. This conflict between ideology and reality is easily demonstrable in the Soviet Union. If "new morality" is really to have any meaning, it can only be that of making moral regulation superfluous and of establishing self-regulation of social living. If one is not starving one has no impulse to steal and consequently does not need a morality which keeps one from stealing. The same basic law also applies to sexuality: if one is sexually satisfied one has no impulse to rape and needs no morality against such an impulse. This is sex-economic self-regulation instead of compulsive moral regulation. Communism, as a result of ignorance of the laws of sexuality, attempted to retain the form of conservative morality and to change its contents; the result is a "new morality" which takes the place of the old. This is incorrect. Just as, according to Lenin, the state does not merely change its form (save during the transition period of the dictatorship of the proletariat),

but "withers away," so does compulsive morality not merely change its form, but it also withers away.

The second error of our critic is the belief that we assume an *absolute* sexuality which comes into conflict with society. It is a basic error of official psychoanalysis to think of the impulses as absolute biologically given facts; true, this is not inherent in psychoanalysis but in the mechanistic thinking of the analysts which, as is always the case with mechanistic thinking, is supplemented with metaphysical theses. Impulses, also, develop, change and subside. The stretches of time, however, in which biological changes take place, are so long compared with the time in which social changes take place that they impress us as absolute facts while the social changes impress us as transitory and relative. If we examine concrete social processes which are very limited in time, it is sufficient if we find a conflict between a given biological impulse and the manner in which the social order treats it. Not so for the biological laws of the sexual process; here, we must carefully consider the relativity and changeability of the emotional structure. If, for instance, we consider the life process of individuals the first prerequisite of *any* social process, it is sufficient to assume that life with its needs exists. But this life itself is not absolute. If we consider cosmic spans of time, life is something which developed from inorganic matter and will change back into it. These considerations show better than anything else how infinitesimal and insignificant are man's illusions concerning his "spiritual, transcendental" tasks, and how important, on the other hand, is the connection between human vegetative life and nature as a whole. This could be misinterpreted in the sense that the social struggle is also insignificant compared with cosmic processes of which man and his society is only a trifling part. One might say that it is relatively insignificant that people kill each other, that they carry a Hitler to power or that they try to abolish unemployment while the stars move through the universe; that it would be better just to enjoy nature. Such an interpretation would be erroneous, for the standpoint of natural science militates against the reaction and favors work democracy. The reaction



tries to press the infinite cosmos and the feeling for nature in which it is reflected in the human beings into the framework of the infinitely small idea of sexual abstinence and sacrifice for nationalistic purposes. Work democracy, on the other hand, tries to bring the small individual and social life into the orbit of the general natural process; it tries to eliminate the conflict created in society by thousands of years of exploitation, mysticism, and sexual suppression; in brief, it is for natural sexuality and against unnatural sexual morality, for international planned economy and against exploitation and nationalism.

National Socialist ideology contains a rational core which is expressed in the slogan of the "closeness of blood and soil" and which gives an enormous impetus to the reactionary movement. National Socialist practice, on the other hand, continues to adhere to all those social forces which contradict the fundanent of the revolutionary movement, the unity of society, nature and technic. It continues to adhere to the principle of class society which is in no way eliminated by the illusion of the unity of the people, and to the private ownership of the means of production which is in no way eliminated by any idea of "the public weal." National Socialism expresses in its ideology, in a mystical manner, what exists as rational core in the revolutionary movement, class-less society and a life in harmony with nature. The revolutionary movement, on the other hand, though not yet fully conscious of its ideology, is clear about the economic and social prerequisites of a realization of its rational view of life, of the realization of happiness in life.

---

This book summarizes the criticism of the prevailing sexual conditions and concepts as it resulted from sex-economic medical experience over a period of years. Part I (THE FIASCO OF SEXUAL MORALISM) appeared about 6 years ago under the title, *GESCHLECHTSREIFE, ENTHALTSAAMKEIT, EHEMORAL*. It was enlarged in some places, but remained essentially unchanged. Part II (THE STRUGGLE FOR THE "NEW LIFE" IN THE SOVIET UNION) is new. It is based on material collected during the past 10 years. The presen-

tation of the inhibition of the sexual revolution in Soviet Russia will make it clear why, in my early sex-political writings, I kept pointing to the Soviet Union. During the past 4 years or so, much *has changed. Together with a general regression to authoritarian principles in Soviet Russia, the achievements of the sexual revolution are being given up to an increasing degree.*

Needless to say, it has been impossible even to touch upon all the relevant problems. A criticism of the prevailing theories of psychic illness would have belonged here as well as an extensive treatment of religion. This was not possible because the problems are inexhaustible and the book had to be kept within reasonable size. The sexual politics of fascism and of the church as the sex-political organization of the patriarchy have been treated in my book, *MASSENPSYCHOLOGIE DES FASCHISMUS*. The present book is neither a sexological textbook nor a history of the present sexual crisis. It confines itself to the demonstration by way of individual examples, of the general *basic* traits of the conflicts in present-day sexual living. The sex-economic concepts presented here are not the result of desk-work. Without many years of closest contact with the youth of working class, of middle class and of intellectual circles, and without constantly checking the experiences gathered there by the therapeutic work with patients, not a sentence of this book could have been written. This must be said in view of certain kinds of criticism. Discussion is fruitful and necessary. But it is a senseless waste of time and energy unless the critics go to the direct source of sexological experience: the lives of the uneducated or miseducated masses, the people who suffer and often struggle, the people whom the God-sent Führers call *Untermenschen*. On the basis of my practical experiences in Germany and Austria, sociological and clinical, I could presume to form an opinion about the course of the sexual revolution in Soviet Russia, even though I did not have constant personal contact with the happenings there. Quite possibly, some aspects of the sex-political conditions are presented somewhat one-sidedly. But the aim was not that of pronouncing absolute truths but of giving a basic presentation of the general ten-

dencies and conflicts. It goes without saying that any correction of facts will be taken into account in later editions.

Finally, I would like to say to my friends who worriedly warn me to leave “dangerous politics” *alone and to confine myself to work in natural science*, that sexology, if it is to deserve its name, is revolutionary, whether it wants to be or not. Who would, in a burning building, calmly write esthetic treatises on the color sense of crickets?

*November, 1935.*

W. R.

PART ONE

THE FIASCO OF SEXUAL MORALISM

## CHAPTER I

# THE CLINICAL BASIS OF SEX-ECONOMIC CRITICISM

### 1. FROM MORAL REGULATION TO SEX-ECONOMIC REGULATION

The sex-economic concepts here presented are based on clinical observations of patients who, in the course of a successful character-analytic treatment, undergo a change in their psychic structure. The question will rightly be raised whether the findings pertaining to the change of an individual neurotic structure into a healthy structure can be applied to the problems of mass structure and its possible alteration. Instead of going into theoretical discussions, let's look at the facts themselves. Certainly, irrational mass behavior cannot be comprehended except on the basis of observations made in the neurotic individual. After all, the principle is the same as in the fight against an epidemic. One fights an epidemic by first examining its individual victims and finding the particular bacillus and its effects which are basically the same for all the victims of the epidemic. The pathological behavior of the average mass individual shows clearly the traits with which the individual patient has made us familiar: general sexual inhibition; the compulsive character of the moral demands; the inability to conceive of the compatibility of sexual gratification and achievement in work; the peculiar belief that the sexuality of children and adolescents is a pathological aberration; the inability to think of any other form of sexuality than lifelong monogamy; the lack of confidence in one's own strength and judgment, with a consequent longing for an omniscient, guiding father-figure, etc. The basic conflicts of all mass individuals are the same; differences in individual development lead only to differences in detail. If one tries to apply to the masses

what one has learned from the individual, one can apply only that which refers to the conflicts which are typical for everyone. In that case, the observations concerning the change in individual structure can correctly be applied to the masses.

Our patients come to us with typical disturbances. The working capacity is always reduced. The actual achievement does not correspond to the demands which society makes on the patient, nor to the capacities which he feels in himself. The capacity for sexual gratification is always greatly reduced if not entirely destroyed. The natural capacity for genital gratification is always found to be replaced by non-genital (pregenital) modes of gratification; there are sadistic concepts of the sexual act, rape phantasies, etc. It can always be shown clearly that this change in character and in sexual behavior took definite form around the age of 4 or 5. The disturbance in achievement, social and sexual, sooner or later, becomes plainly evident to everyone. Every patient is burdened with a conflict between instinct and morals; under the conditions of neurotic sexual repression, this conflict is insoluble. The moral demands which the patient—under constant social pressure—continues to make on himself, maintain and increase a damming-up of his sexual—and, in a wider sense, vegetative—needs. The more severe the disturbance of genital potency, the greater the discrepancy between *need* for gratification and *capacity* for gratification. This in turn accentuates the moral pressure which is needed to keep the dammed-up energies under control. Since the whole conflict is essentially unconscious, the individual is inevitably unable to solve it by himself.

In the conflict between instinct and morals, ego, and outer world, the organism is forced to *armor* itself against the instinct as well as the outer world. This armoring of the organism results inevitably in a limitation of the total ability to live. The majority of people suffer from this rigid armoring; there is a wall between them and life. This armor is the chief reason for the loneliness of so many people in the midst of collective living.

Character-analytic treatment releases the vegetative energies

from their fixation in the armor. The *immediate* result of this is an intensification of the antisocial and perverse impulses, and with that, of social anxiety and moral pressure. If, however, one dissolves, at the same time, the infantile fixations to the parental home, to the infantile traumata and the antisexual taboos, more and more energy finds its way to the genital system. With that, the natural genital needs awaken to new life or are established for the first time. If, now, one eliminates the genital inhibitions and genital anxiety, if thus the patient acquires the ability for full orgasmic gratification and has the good fortune to find a suitable sexual partner, one observes a change in the patient's total behavior, the extent of which is often surprising. The most important changes are the following:

While previously the whole thinking and acting was determined by unconscious, irrational motives, the patient now becomes increasingly capable of acting and reacting rationally. In the course of this process, inclinations to mysticism, religiosity, infantile dependence, superstitious beliefs, etc., disappear more and more, without the exertion of any "educational" influence on the patient. While previously the patient was completely armored, incapable of contact with himself and his environment, capable only of unnatural *pseudo*-contacts, he now develops an increasing capacity for immediate, natural contact with his impulses as well as his environment. The result of this is a visible development of a natural, spontaneous behavior instead of the previous unnatural, artificial behavior.

In most patients we observe a double nature, as it were. Outwardly, they appear unnatural and queer. Yet, behind all this pathological façade one can sense that which is healthy. What makes people individually different is, as things are today, essentially their individual neurotic superstructure. In the process of getting well, this individual differentiation is largely lost and gives way to a *simplification* of behavior. As a result of this simplification, patients on their way to health become more similar in their basic traits, without, however, losing their individual characteristics. For example, each individual will cover

up his inability to work in a different manner. If he now loses his work disturbance and acquires confidence in his own functioning, he also loses all those character traits which served to overcompensate for his inferiority feeling. While the overcompensations may be highly individual, the self-confidence based on free-flowing achievement is, in all people, fundamentally the same.

The same is true for the attitude toward sexuality. If one represses one's own sexuality one develops all kinds of moralistic and esthetic defenses. When the patients regain contact with their own sexual needs, these neurotic differentiations disappear. The attitude toward natural sexuality becomes similar in all individuals; it is characterized by the affirmation of pleasure and the absence of sexual guilt feelings. Previously, the insoluble conflict between instinctual need and moral inhibition forced the patient to act, in every respect, according to some law outside and above him. Whatever he thought or did, he measured by a moralistic yardstick, while at the same time he protested against this compulsion. When the patient, in the process of acquiring a different structure, realizes the indispensability of genital gratification, he loses this moralistic strait-jacket and with it the damming-up of his instinctual needs. Previously, the moral pressure had intensified the impulse and made it antisocial; this in turn necessitated an intensification of the moral pressure. Now, when the capacity for gratification begins to equal the intensity of the impulses, moral regulation becomes unnecessary. The previously indispensable mechanism of self-control is no longer needed. This is so because the energy is being withdrawn from the antisocial impulses; there is little left which needs to be kept under control. The healthy individual has no compulsive morality because he has no impulses which call for moral inhibition. What antisocial impulses may be left are easily controlled, provided the basic genital needs are satisfied. All this is shown clearly in the practical behavior of the individual who has become orgasmically potent. Intercourse with a prostitute becomes impossible. Sadistic phantasies disappear. To expect love as a



right or even to rape the sexual partner becomes inconceivable, as do ideas of seducing children. Anal, exhibitionistic or other perversions disappear, and with these the social anxiety and guilt feelings. The incestuous fixation to parent and siblings loses its interest; this liberates the energy which was bound up in such fixations. In brief, all these phenomena point to the fact that the organism is capable of *self-regulation*.

People who have acquired the ability for orgasmic satisfaction are far more capable of monogamous relationships than people who suffer from sexual stasis. And the monogamous attitude of these people is not due to the inhibition of polygamous impulses or to moral scruples; it is based on the sex-economic principle of experiencing again and again vivid sexual pleasure and gratification with the same sexual partner. This presupposes full sexual harmony between the sexual partners. There is, in this respect, no difference between the healthy man and the healthy woman. If, on the other hand, a suitable partner is lacking, which under present sexual conditions is the rule, the ability for monogamy turns into its opposite, an irrepressible search for a suitable partner. If he or she is found, the monogamous attitude re-establishes itself automatically and continues as long as there is sexual harmony and gratification. Thoughts of and desire for other partners either do not appear or, because of the interest in the partner, are not put into action. However, the old relationship inevitably collapses if it goes stale and a new companionship promises higher pleasure. This fact, incontrovertible as it is, is an insoluble conflict in the sexual order of our society, in which economic interests and consideration of the children are at variance with the sex-economic principle. Thus it is just the most healthy people who, under a sex-negative social order, are exposed to the most intense subjective suffering.

The attitude of orgasmically *disturbed* people, that is, the majority of people, is different. Since they derive less pleasure from the sexual act, they are better able to do without a sexual partner for a shorter or longer period of time, or else, they are less fastidious, because the sexual act does not mean much to them.

The promiscuity of their sexual relations is a result of this sexual disturbance. Such sexually disturbed people are better able to submit to the demands of lifelong monogamy. Their fidelity, however, is not based on sexual gratification but on moral inhibitions.

When a patient on his way to health finds a suitable sexual partner, he not only loses all nervous symptoms; he also finds, often to his surprise, that he is capable of regulating his life and of solving conflicts in an unneurotic way, with a facility previously unknown to him. He develops an automatic security in directing his impulses and social relationships. In all this, he simply follows the pleasure principle. The simplification in his attitude toward life, as expressed in his structure, his thinking and feeling, eliminates many sources of conflict from his existence. At the same time, he acquires a critical attitude toward the moral order of today.

It is clear, then, that the principle of *moral regulation* is opposed to that of *sex-economic self-regulation*.

In our society which is sexually sick and refuses any aid in the task of promoting sexual health, the therapeutic task of making people capable of orgasmic gratification meets all kinds of almost insuperable obstacles. One is the limited number of sexually healthy people who come into consideration as sexual partners for the patient who is approaching cure. In addition, there are all the various limitations imposed by a compulsive sexual morality. The person who has become genitally healthy must of necessity change from being an unconscious hypocrite and become a conscious hypocrite toward all those institutions and social conditions which impede the development of his healthy natural sexuality. Others develop the ability to alter their environment in such a manner that the restricting influence of the present social order becomes insignificant.

The clinical experiences just summarized<sup>1</sup> allow us to draw general conclusions with regard to the *social* situation. True, the

---

<sup>1</sup> For an extensive presentation, cf. DIE FUNKTION DES ORGASMUS and CHARAKTER-ANALYSE. *Translator's note:* See also 'THE FUNCTION OF THE ORGASM.'

vast perspectives of these conclusions, with regard to such problems as the prevention of the neuroses, the struggle against mysticism and superstition, the age-old problem of the alleged conflict between nature and culture, instinct and morals, etc., were at first surprising and confusing. But years of checking against ethnological and sociological findings left no doubt as to the correctness of these conclusions drawn from the change in structure from the moral principle to the sex-economic principle of self-regulation. If, now, a social movement would succeed in changing social conditions in such a manner as to replace the sex negation of today by general sex affirmation (with all its economic prerequisites), then the alteration of the structure of the masses could become a reality. This does not mean, of course, that in that case one would be able to treat all members of society; this is a frequent misunderstanding of sex-economy. It only means that the experiences gained in the process of changing the individual structure provide valid basic principles for a different education of the infant and the adolescent. This education would no longer produce and cultivate the conflict between nature and culture, individual and society, sexuality and sociality.

The fact must be recognized, however, that the therapeutic experiences and theoretical findings made possible through the introduction of the orgasm theory into psychotherapy are at variance with practically every concept previously evolved by science. The absolute antithesis of sexuality and culture governs all of morality, philosophy, culture, science, psychology and therapy like an inviolable dogma. In all this, Freud's psychoanalysis undoubtedly assumes the most important position; in spite of its original clinical and scientific discoveries, it adheres, nevertheless, to this absolute antithesis. It is imperative, therefore, to describe briefly the contradictions at the roots of the psychoanalytic cultural philosophy which caused its scientific work to degenerate into metaphysics. This cultural philosophy is the source of great confusion.

## 2. A CONTRADICTION IN FREUD'S CULTURAL PHILOSOPHY

a) *Sexual repression and instinct renunciation.*

A serious discussion of the sociological consequences of psychoanalysis requires the clarification of the following question: Is the so-called psychoanalytic sociology and *Weltanschauung*, as presented in Freud's later works and elaborated into often grotesque formulations in the writings of such of his pupils as Roheim, Pfister, Müller-Braunschweig, Kolnai, Laforgue and others, a consistent and logical development of psychoanalytic psychology? Or is the opposite the case? Does this sociology and *Weltanschauung* owe its existence to a break with clinical psychoanalytic findings, to an incomplete or erroneous interpretation of clinical findings? If such a break could be demonstrated in clinical theory itself, if, furthermore, the connection could be shown between this clinical theory and the basic sociological concepts, the most important source of error in analytic sociology would be found. (Another source of error is the equation of individual and society.)

Freud's cultural philosophical standpoint was always that culture owes its existence to instinctual repression and renunciation. The basic idea is that cultural achievements are the result of sublimated sexual energy; from this it follows logically that sexual suppression and repression are an indispensable factor in the cultural process. There is historical evidence of the incorrectness of this formulation; there are in existence highly cultured societies without any sexual suppression and a completely free sex life.<sup>2</sup>

What is correct in this theory is only that sexual suppression forms the mass-psychological basis for a *certain* culture, namely, the *patriarchal authoritarian* one, in all of its forms. What is incorrect is the formulation that sexual suppression is the basis of culture in general. How did Freud arrive at this concept? Certainly not for conscious reasons of politics or *Weltanschauung*. On the contrary: early works such as that on "cultural

<sup>2</sup> Cf. W. Reich, *DER EINBRUCH DER SEXUALMORAL*, 1935.

sexual morals" point definitely in the direction of a criticism of culture in the sense of a sexual revolution. Freud never followed this path; on the contrary, he was adverse to any attempts in this direction and once called them "not being in the middle of the road of psychoanalysis." It was exactly my early attempts at a sex policy involving criticism of culture which led to the first serious differences of opinion between Freud and me.

In analyzing the psychic mechanisms, Freud found the unconscious filled with antisocial impulses. Everyone using the psychoanalytic method can confirm these findings. Every man has phantasies of murdering his father and of taking the father's place with his mother. In everyone, sadistic impulses, inhibited by more or less conscious guilt feelings, are found. In most women, violent impulses to castrate men, to acquire the penis, e.g., by swallowing it, can be found. The inhibition of such impulses, which continue to work in the unconscious, results not only in social adjustment, but also in all kinds of disturbances (as, for example, hysterical vomiting). The man's sadistic phantasies of hurting or piercing the woman in the sexual act lead to various kinds of impotence if they are inhibited by anxiety and guilt feelings; if they are not, they may lead to perverse activities or sex murder. Such unconscious desires as that of eating feces can be found in a great many individuals, regardless of their social class. Such psychoanalytic discoveries as that the oversolicitude of a mother for her child or of a woman for her husband corresponds to the intensity of her unconscious phantasies of murder were highly inconvenient for the ideological champions of "sacred mother love" or of the "sacrament of marriage"; nevertheless, they are correct. Such examples could be multiplied indefinitely; but let us return to our subject. These contents of the unconscious were shown to be remnants of infantile attitudes toward parents, siblings, etc. In order to exist and to fit into our culture, the children have to suppress these impulses. The price they pay for it is the acquisition of a neurosis, that is, a reduction of their ability to work and of their sexual potency.

The finding of the antisocial nature of the unconscious was correct; so was the finding of the necessity of instinctual renunciation for the purpose of adjustment to social existence. However, two facts are at variance: On the one hand, the child has to suppress its instincts in order to become capable of cultural adjustment. On the other hand, it acquires, in this very process, a neurosis which in turn makes it incapable of cultural development and adjustment and in the end makes it antisocial. In order to make natural instinctual gratification possible, one has to eliminate the repression and to liberate the instincts. This is the prerequisite of cure, although not as yet the cure itself as Freud's early statements would have it. What, then, should take the place of instinctual repression? Certainly not the repressed instincts themselves, because, according to psychoanalytic theory, that would mean the impossibility of existing in this culture.

In many places in psychoanalytic literature we find the statement that the uncovering of the unconscious, that is, the affirmation of its existence, does by no means imply an affirmation of the corresponding action. The analyst lays down a law here which applies for life as well as for the treatment session: "You are allowed and supposed to *say* what you want; but that does not mean that you also can *do* what you want."

However, the responsible analyst was—and always is—confronted with the question as to what is to happen to the previously repressed and now liberated instincts. The psychoanalytic answer was: *sublimation* and *rejection*. Since, however, only the fewest patients prove capable of sublimation to a sufficient degree, the only other way out is renunciation through rejection of the instinct. Repression comes to be replaced by rejection. This demand was justified by the following formulation: The child faced its instincts with a weak, undeveloped ego and thus had no other choice but that of repression; the adult faces his instincts with a strong, adult ego which is capable of handling the instincts by way of rejection. Though this formulation contradicts clinical experience, it became—and still is—the accepted

one. This point of view also dominates psychoanalytic pedagogy, as represented, for example, by Anna Freud.

Since, according to this concept, the individual becomes capable of culture as a result of instinctual renunciation instead of repression, and since society is regarded as behaving like the individual, it follows from this concept that culture is based on instinctual renunciation.

The whole construction seems unobjectionable and enjoys the approval not only of the majority of analysts but of the representatives of an abstract concept of culture in general. This substitution of renunciation and rejection for repression seems to banish the ghost which raised its threatening head when Freud confronted the world with his early findings. These findings showed unequivocally that sexual repression makes people not only sick but also incapable of work and cultural achievement. The whole world began to rage against Freud because of the threat to morals and ethics, and reproached Freud with preaching the "living out," with threatening culture, etc. Freud's alleged antimoralism was one of the most potent weapons of his early opponents. This ghost did not begin to vanish until the theory of rejection was propounded; Freud's earlier assurance that he was affirming "culture," that his discoveries constituted no threat to it, had made little impression. This was shown by the never-ending talk about "pansexualism." Then, after the new formulation of rejection, the previous enmity was replaced by partial acceptance. For just as long as the instincts were not lived out, it did not make any difference, from a "cultural point of view," whether it was the mechanism of instinctual rejection or that of repression which played the Cerberus keeping the shadows of the underworld from emerging to the surface. One was even able to register progress: that from the unconscious repression of evil to the voluntary renunciation of instinctual gratification. Since ethics does not consist in being asexual but, on the contrary, in resisting sexual temptations, everybody could now agree with everybody. Psychoanalysis, previously condemned, had now itself

become capable of culture—unfortunately by way of “renunciation of the instinct,” that is, the renunciation of its own theory of the instincts.

I regret to have to destroy some illusions. The whole system contains a miscalculation which is easily demonstrable. Not by any means in the sense that the psychoanalytic findings on which these conclusions are based are incorrect. On the contrary, they are quite correct; only, they are incomplete, and many of the formulations are abstract and thus distract from the real conclusions.

*b) Instinctual gratification and instinctual renunciation.*

Those German psychoanalysts who attempted a “*Gleichschaltung*” of psychoanalysis tried to justify their unscientific behavior by quotations from Freud’s writings. They contain, in fact, formulations which nullify the revolutionary character of clinical psychoanalytic findings and which clearly demonstrate the contradiction between the scientist and the middle-class cultural philosopher in Freud. One such quotation runs:

It is a bad misunderstanding, explained only by ignorance, if people say that psychoanalysis expects the cure of neurotic illness from the free “living out” of sexuality. On the contrary, the making conscious of the repressed sexual desires makes possible their *control* [italics mine. W.R.], a control which could not have been achieved by the repression. It would be more correct to say that the analysis liberates the neurotic from the shackles of his sexuality.

(Ges. Schriften, Bd. XI, p. 217f.)

If, for example, the 17-year-old daughter of a National Socialist dignitary suffers from hysterical attacks as a result of a repressed desire for sexual intercourse, this desire, in the psychoanalytic treatment, will be recognized, to begin with, as an incestuous desire, and will be rejected as such. So far so good. But what happens to the sexual need? According to the above-quoted formulation, the girl is “liberated” from the shackles of her sexuality. Clinically, however, it looks like this: When the



girl, with the aid of the analysis, frees herself from her father, she liberates herself only from the toils of her incest wish, *but not from her sexuality as such*. Freud's formulation neglects this basic fact. The scientific dispute about the role of genitality took its origin precisely from this clinical problem; it is the central point of divergence between the sex-economic and the revised psychoanalytic formulation. Freud's formulation postulates a renunciation on the part of the girl of all sexual life. In this form, psychoanalysis is acceptable even to the Nazi dignitary and becomes, in the hands of analysts like Müller-Braunschweig, an instrument for the "breeding of the heroic human." This form of psychoanalysis, however, has nothing in common with that psychoanalysis contained in the books which Hitler had burned. The latter kind of psychoanalysis, not hide-bound by reactionary prejudice, states unequivocally that the girl can get well only if she transfers the genital desires from the father to a friend with whom she satisfies them. But just this is at variance with the total Nazi ideology and inexorably brings up the whole question of the social sexual order. Because, in order to be able to live sex-economically, it is not sufficient that the girl have a free genital sexuality; she needs, in addition, an undisturbed room, proper contraceptives, a friend who is capable of love, that is, not a National Socialist with a sex-negative structure; she needs understanding parents and a sex-affirmative social atmosphere; these needs are all the greater the less she is in a financial situation which would allow her to break through the social barriers of adolescent sex life.

The replacement of sexual repression by renunciation or rejection would be a simple matter were it not for the fact that these latter mechanisms are also dependent on the economy of instinctual life. Renunciation of the instinct is possible only under definite sex-economic conditions. The same is true of sublimation. Character-analytic experience shows clearly that lasting renunciation of a pathological or antisocial impulse is possible only when the sexual economy is in order, that is, if there is no sexual stasis which provides energy for the impulse which is to be re-

nounced. *An ordered sex-economy, however, is possible only in the presence of such sexual gratification as corresponds to any given age.* Which means that an adult can give up infantile and pathogenic desires only if he experiences full genital gratification. The perverse and neurotic modes of gratification against which society should be protected are in themselves only substitutes for genital gratification and arise only if genital gratification is disturbed or made impossible. This fact makes it clear that we cannot speak of instinctual gratification or renunciation in general. We must ask concretely: the gratification of *what* instinct, the renunciation of *what* instinct? If analytic therapy sees its job in eliminating repressions and not in preaching morals, then it can bring about the renunciation only of *one* kind of gratification: that which does not correspond to the respective age or stage of development. Thus, it will bring a girl to the renunciation of her infantile fixation to her father by nothing else but making this fixation conscious. But that does not imply a renunciation of sexual desires as such, because the sexual energy continues to urge toward discharge. While it is easy to make her give up her sexual desires for her father, she cannot be brought to renounce her sexual gratification with a boy her age except by moralistic arguments; to do this, however, is at variance with therapeutic principles and possibilities of cure. On the other hand, she can really dissolve her fixation to her father only under one condition: when her sexuality finds another, normal object and *actual gratification*. Unless this is the case, the infantile fixation is not dissolved, or there occurs a regression to other infantile instinctual goals, and the basic problem continues to exist.

The same is true of *any* case of neurotic disease. If a woman is dissatisfied in her marriage, she will unconsciously reactivate infantile sexual demands; these she can give up only if her sexuality finds another satisfactory outlet. True, the rejection of the infantile sexual desires is a prerequisite for the establishment of a normal sexuality; but the establishment of a normal sex life with actual gratification is also an indispensable prerequisite for the

final relinquishing of the infantile instinctual goals. A sexual pervert or criminal, such as a sex murderer, can be cured of his pathological impulses only if he finds his way into a biologically normal sex life. The alternative, thus, is not instinctual *renunciation* or instinctual living out, but renunciation of *what* impulses, and gratification of *what* impulses?

In speaking abstractly of the evil nature of the repressed unconscious, one obscures the most fundamental facts not only of the therapy and prevention of the neuroses, but of education as well. Freud made the discovery that the unconscious of the neurotics—that is, the vast majority of people in our civilization—contains essentially infantile, cruel, antisocial impulses. This finding is correct. But it obscured another fact, the fact, namely, that the unconscious also contains many impulses which represent natural biological demands, such as the sexual desire of adolescents or of people tied down in an unhappy marriage. The intensity of the later infantile and antisocial impulses derives, historically and economically, from the non-gratification of these natural demands; the dammed-up libidinal energy partly reinforces primitive infantile impulses, partly creates entirely new ones, mostly of an antisocial nature, such as the desire for exhibitionism or impulses to sex murder. Ethnological research shows that such impulses are absent in primitive peoples up to a definite point of economic development and begin to make their appearance only after social repression of normal love life has become an established feature.

These antisocial impulses, which result from social repression of normal sexuality and which have to be repressed because society—rightly—does not allow them to be satisfied, these impulses are considered *biological facts* by psychoanalysis. This concept is closely related to that of Hirschfeld that exhibitionism is due to special exhibitionistic hormones. This naïve mechanistic biologism is so difficult to unmask because it serves a definite function in our society: that of shifting the problem from the sociological to the biological realm where nothing can be done about it.

There is such a thing as a *sociology of the unconscious* and of antisocial sexuality, that is, a social history of the unconscious impulses, with regard to their intensity as well as their contents. Not only is repression itself a sociological phenomenon, but also that which causes the repression. The study of the "partial impulses" will have to take pointers from ethnological findings such as the fact that in certain matriarchal societies there is little if any of the anal phase of libidinal development which in our society is considered a normal stage between the oral and the genital phase. This is so because in these societies the children are nursed until the third or fourth year when they immediately enter a phase of intensive genital play activities.

The psychoanalytic concept of antisocial impulses is an absolute one and thus leads to conclusions which are at variance with the facts. If, on the other hand, one realizes the *relative* character of the antisocial impulses, one arrives at basically different conclusions regarding not only psychotherapy but especially sociology and sex-economy. The anal activities of a child of one or two have nothing whatsoever to do with "social" or "antisocial." If, however, one adheres to the abstract view that these anal impulses are antisocial, one will institute a regime designed to make the child "capable of culture" as early as the 6th month of life; the later result is exactly the opposite, namely, incapacity for anal sublimation and the development of anal-neurotic disturbances. The mechanistic concept of the absolute antithesis between sexuality and culture makes even analytically trained parents take measures against infantile masturbation, at least in the form of "mild diversions." As far as I know, none of the writings of Anna Freud mention what in private conversation she admitted to be an inevitable conclusion from psychoanalytic findings: that infantile masturbation is a physiological manifestation and should *not* be inhibited. If one adheres to the concept that that which is repressed and unconscious is also antisocial, one will, for example, condemn the genital demands of the adolescent. This is substantiated by such phrases as that

the "reality principle" requires the postponement of instinctual gratification.

The fact that this reality principle is *itself relative*, that it is determined by an authoritarian society and serves its purposes, this decisive fact goes carefully unmentioned; to mention this, they say, is "politics," and science has nothing to do with politics. They refuse to see the fact that not to mention it is also politics. Such attitudes have seriously endangered analytic progress; not only have they prevented the discovery of certain facts, but, more important, they have hindered the practical application of definitely established facts by misinterpreting them in terms of conservative cultural concepts. Since psychoanalysis constantly deals with the influences exerted upon the individual by society as well as with judgments as to what is healthy or sick, social or antisocial, and at the same time is unaware of the revolutionary character of its method and findings, it moves around in a tragic circle: it finds that sexual repression endangers culture and at the same time that it is a necessary prerequisite of culture.

Let us summarize the facts which psychoanalysis has overlooked and which are at variance with the psychoanalytic concept of culture:

The unconscious itself is—quantitatively as well as qualitatively—socially determined;

The giving up of infantile and antisocial impulses presupposes the gratification of the normal physiological sexual needs;

Sublimation, as the essential cultural achievement of the psychic apparatus, is possible only in the absence of sexual repression; in the adult, it applies only to the *pregenital*, but not to the *genital* impulses;

Genital gratification—the decisive sex-economic factor in the prevention of neuroses and establishment of social achievement—is at variance, in every respect, with present-day laws and with every patriarchal religion;

The elimination of sexual repression—introduced by psychoanalysis as a therapy as well as a sociologically important factor—

is strictly at variance with all those cultural elements in our society which are based just on this repression.

To the extent to which psychoanalysis maintains its affirmation of patriarchal culture, it does so at the expense of the very results of its own work. The conflict between the patriarchal cultural concepts of the analytic investigators on the one hand and the scientific results which militate against this culture on the other hand is solved by them in favor of the patriarchal Weltanschauung. When psychoanalysis does not dare to accept the consequences of its findings, it points to the allegedly non-political (unpragmatic) character of science, while, in fact, every step of psychoanalytic theory and practice deals with political (pragmatic) issues.

If one investigates ecclesiastical, fascist and other reactionary ideologies for their unconscious content, one finds that they are essentially defense reactions. They are formed for fear of the unconscious inferno which everyone carries within himself. From this, one could deduce a justification of an ascetic morality only if the unconscious antisocial impulses were absolute and biologically given; if that were so, the political reaction would be correct, and any attempt to eliminate sexual misery would be senseless. Then, the patriarchal world could correctly point out that the destruction of "the higher qualities," "the central values," the "divine" and the "moral" in the human would lead to sexual and ethical chaos. This is what people mean unconsciously when they talk of "Kulturbolschewismus." The revolutionary movement—except for the sex-political wing—does not know this connection; in fact, it often finds itself on the same front with the political reaction when it comes to basic questions of sex-economy. True, it turns against sex-economic principles for different reasons than does the political reaction: it does not know these principles and their implications. It also believes in the biological and absolute nature of the antisocial impulses and consequently in the necessity of moral inhibition and regulation. It overlooks, like its opponents, the fact that the moral

regulation of instinctual life creates exactly what it pretends to master: antisocial impulses.

Sex-economic investigation, on the other hand, shows that the antisocial unconscious impulses—as far as they are really antisocial and not just regarded as such by the moralists—are a result of moral regulation and will continue to exist as long as that regulation exists. Sex-economic regulation alone can eliminate the antithesis between culture and nature; with the elimination of sexual repression, the perverse and antisocial impulses will also be eliminated.

### 3. SECONDARY IMPULSES AND MORAL REGULATION

A very important contention in the struggle between so-called “Kulturbolschewismus” and the fascist “antibolshevism” was that the social revolution completely destroyed morals and would lead to sexual chaos. This contention used to be countered by the argument that, quite on the contrary, capitalism had produced the social chaos and the social revolution would undoubtedly establish security in social living. In the Soviet Union, the attempt to replace the authoritarian moral principle by non-authoritarian self-regulation failed.

No more convincing was the attempt to compete with authoritarian society in pointing to one's own “morality.” First of all, one has to learn to understand why it is that the average person is such a slave to the concept of morality, why to him the idea of a “social revolution” is inevitably synonymous with the idea of sexual and cultural chaos. This question has been already answered, in part, by our study of fascist ideology: to the unconscious of the average person, with his sex-negative structure, “Kulturbolschewismus” means the “living out of sensual sexuality.” To assume that it should be possible, in social revolution, to apply immediately, in a practical way, the findings of sex-economy which would eliminate moral regulation, would be completely to misunderstand sex-economic thinking.

As soon as a society assumes the ownership of the social

means of production and destroys the authoritarian apparatus, it is inevitably confronted by the question as to how human living should be regulated: morally or "freely." Quite obviously, an immediate liberation of sexuality or immediate elimination of moral norms and moral regulation is out of the question. We know that people, their structure being what it is today, are incapable of self-regulation; they may be able to establish economic democracy immediately, but not a rational, self-governing society. This is, after all, what Lenin meant when he said that the state could disappear only gradually. If one wants to eliminate moral regulation and to replace it by self-regulation, one has to know to what extent the old, moral regulation was indispensable and to what extent it was harmful, individually and socially.

The moral point of view of the political reaction is that of an absolute antithesis between biological impulse and social interest. Based on this antithesis, the reaction points to the necessity of moral regulation; for, they say, were one to "eliminate morals," the "animal instincts" would gain the upper hand and this would "lead to chaos." It is evident that the formula of the threatening social chaos is nothing but the fear of human instincts. Are morals necessary, then? Yes, since antisocial impulses actually do endanger social living. This being so, how would it be possible to abolish moral regulation?

This question cannot be answered without first considering the following sex-economic findings. Moral regulation represses and keeps from gratification the *natural* vegetative needs. This results in *secondary, pathologically antisocial* impulses. These, in turn, have to be inhibited of necessity. Thus, morality does not owe its existence to the necessity of inhibiting antisocial tendencies. It developed, in primitive society, when a certain upper class with economic superiority began to attain power; for economic reasons, this class had an interest in suppressing the natural needs, though they, in themselves, *in no way* disturbed sociability.<sup>3</sup> Moral regulation gained a reason for its existence the

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Reich, EINBRUCH DER SEXUALMORAL, 1935.



moment when that which it produced *actually* began to endanger social life. For example, the suppression of the natural gratification of hunger led to theft; this in turn necessitated the moral condemnation of theft.

Thus, in any discussion as to whether morals are necessary or should be abolished, whether one set of morals should be replaced by another, whether, finally, moral regulation should be replaced by self-regulation—in such a discussion we will not get one step farther unless we distinguish the *natural* biological impulses from the *secondary* antisocial impulses which owe their existence to compulsive morals. The unconscious of the human in an authoritarian society is filled with both kinds of impulses. If one suppresses—as one needs must—the antisocial impulses, the natural biological impulses suffer the same fate. While to the political reaction the concept of impulses and that of “anti-social” are one and the same thing, the differentiation just mentioned points a way out of the dilemma.

As long as the alteration of human structure has not succeeded to such an extent that the natural regulation of the vegetative energies automatically excludes any antisocial tendency, so long is it impossible to abolish moral regulation. This process of alteration of structure is bound to take a very long time. The elimination of moral regulation and its displacement by sex-economic regulation will be possible only to the degree to which the realm of the natural biological impulses is extended at the expense of the secondary antisocial impulses. That, and how, this takes place we know with certainty from character-analytic experience with the individual patient. Here, we see how the patient demobilizes his moral compulsions only to the extent to which he regains his natural sexuality. With the loss of moral regulation by his conscience he also loses his antisociality; he develops a natural morality, as contrasted with a compulsive one, to the same extent that he becomes genitally healthy.

Thus, the coming social revolution—if it knows what it is doing—will not suddenly abolish moral regulation. It will first alter the structure of people in such a manner that they become capable

of social living and working without authority and moral pressure, out of their own independence and really voluntary discipline which cannot be imposed from outside. True, in such a transitory period, moral regulation will apply only to the anti-social impulses. Such things as the punishment of the seduction of children by adults will not be abolished as long as the structure of the masses of adults contains the impulse to seduce children. To this extent, conditions after the revolution would seem to be identical with those in an authoritarian society. The difference—and it is an important one—between the two societies, however, would be that a non-authoritarian society would not put any obstacles in the path of the gratification of the *natural* needs. It would, for example, not only not prohibit a love relationship between two adolescents; it would give it its full protection and help. It would, for example, not only not prohibit infantile masturbation; it would deal severely with any adult who would prevent the child from developing its natural sexuality.

However, we should guard against an absolute and rigid concept of the “sexual impulse.” The secondary impulse, too, is determined not only by its goal, but also by the period at which it develops and by the conditions under which it strives for gratification. One and the same manifestation may be natural in one case and at a certain period, antisocial and unnatural in another case or at another period. To illustrate: If a child of one or two wets the bed or plays with its feces, this is a natural phase in its pregenital development. At this period, punishing the child for these impulses is an action which itself deserves the most severe punishment. If, however, the same individual at the age of 14 were to eat its feces or play with them, this would be a secondary, antisocial, pathological impulse. The individual should not be punished but hospitalized for treatment. But in a free society, this would not be sufficient. Rather, the most important task of society would be that of changing education in such a manner that such pathological impulses would not develop at all.

To take another example. If a boy of 15 were to develop a love relationship with a girl of 13, a free society not only would not

interfere, it would affirm and protect it. If, however, the boy of 15 tried to seduce little girls of 3 for sexual gains or tried to force a girl of his age into a sexual relationship, this would be considered antisocial. It would indicate that the boy's healthy impulse to establish a normal sex relationship with a girl his age was inhibited. In summary one would say that in the transition period from an authoritarian to a free society, the rule should be: Moral regulation for secondary, antisocial impulses, and sex-economic self-regulation for natural biological needs. The goal is that of increasingly putting out of function the secondary impulses and with them moral compulsion, and of replacing them completely by sex-economic self-regulation.

These formulations regarding the secondary impulses could easily be misinterpreted by moralists and other pathological people in such a way as to be made to serve their own purposes. But before long it should be possible to make so clear the difference between natural and secondary impulses that the authoritarian moral hypocrisy will find it impossible to sneak again into human sex life by a back door. The existence of severe moral tenets always proves, and always has, that the biological needs, particularly the sexual needs, are not being gratified. Every kind of moral regulation is *per se* sex-negative, condemns or denies the natural sexual needs. Any kind of moralism is life-negative, and the most important task of a free society is that of making possible for its members the satisfaction of their natural needs.

Sex-economy has as its aim "moral behavior" no less than does moral regulation. Only, in sex-economy, "morality" means an altogether different thing: not something which is diametrically opposed to nature, but a complete harmony of nature and culture. Sex-economy fights moral regulation because moral regulation produces just what it attempts to fight: antisocial impulses. Sex-economy does not fight a morality which is life-affirmative.

#### 4. SEX-ECONOMIC "MORALITY"

Everywhere in the world people are fighting for a new regulation of social life. In this fight they are hampered not only by the

most difficult economic and social conditions; they are also inhibited, confused and endangered by their own biopsychic structure which is basically the same as that of the very people against whom they fight. The goal of a cultural revolution is the development of people with a structure which would make them capable of self-regulation. Those who today fight for this goal often live according to principles which correspond to this goal; but, they are no more than "principles." We have to be quite clear about the fact that today there are no people with a solid, fully developed sex-affirmative structure, for all of us have gone through an authoritarian, religious, sex-negative educational machine. Nevertheless, in shaping our personal lives, we achieve an attitude which could be called sex-economic. Some succeed better in achieving this alteration of structure, others less well. If one has lived and worked for a long time with industrial workers, one knows that among them a bit of the future sex-economic regulation is occasionally anticipated.

A few examples may show what "sex-economic morality" is and how it anticipates the "morality of the future." The fact should be emphasized that, in living thus, we do not form an island by any means; what enables us to have such concepts and to live according to them is the fact that such modes of living and such new "moral principles" are part of a general developmental process in society, a process which takes place entirely independently of the views of this or that individual or political or cultural group.

Fifteen or twenty years ago, it was a disgrace for an unmarried girl *not* to be a virgin. Today the girls of all social circles and strata—some more, some less, some more clearly, some more vaguely—have begun to develop the view that it is a disgrace *still* to be a virgin at the age of 18, 20 or 22.

Not long ago, it was considered a moral crime, calling for drastic punishment, when a couple who intended to be married became sexually acquainted with each other beforehand. Today, quite spontaneously, and in spite of the influence of church, scholastic medicine and puritanical minds, the view becomes

more and more general that it is unhygienic, imprudent and possibly disastrous if two people bind themselves without having first convinced themselves that they are matched in the basis of their life together, that is, in their sexual life.

Extramarital sexual intercourse, looked upon as a vice a few years ago and considered "moral turpitude" before the law, today (1936) has become a matter of course, and a vital necessity, for example with the youth among workers and the middle classes of Germany.

A few years ago, the idea that a girl of 15 or 16—though she be sexually mature—had a boy friend seemed absurd; today it has already become a matter for serious discussion; in a few more years it will be as much a matter of course as is today the right of the unmarried woman to have a sexual partner. A hundred years from now, such demands as that women teachers should have no sex life will provoke the same incredulous smile as does today mention of the times when men put chastity belts on their women. Just as ridiculous will appear what today still is an almost general ideology: that the man has to seduce a woman, while a woman is not supposed to seduce a man.

It is still far from being a matter of course that one does not engage in sexual intercourse if the sexual partner does not want to. The concept of "marital duty" has legal backing and legal consequences. Nevertheless, in our sex hygiene clinics and medical practice we see that a contrasting attitude makes itself felt: the attitude that, notwithstanding social and legal ideology, a man does not have intercourse with his partner when she does not wish it; more, when she is not genitally aroused. It still is generally considered a "natural" fact, however, that women suffer the sexual act without any inner participation. It is part of natural morality not to have sexual intercourse unless both are in full genital readiness; this eliminates the masculine ideology of rape and the attitude of the woman that she has to be seduced or mildly raped.

The attitude is still quite common that one should jealously watch over one's partner's fidelity. Newspaper stories and suicide

statistics eloquently show how rotten our society is in this respect. Nevertheless, gradually the insight gains ground that nobody has the right to prohibit his or her partner from entering a temporary or lasting sexual relationship with somebody else. He has only the right either to withdraw or to win the partner back. This attitude, which is entirely in accordance with sex-economic findings, has nothing to do with the hyper-radical idea that one should not be jealous at all, that "it doesn't make any difference" if the partner enters another relationship. It is absolutely natural to suffer pain at the thought that a *beloved* partner embraces somebody else. This *natural jealousy* has to be strictly distinguished from *possessive jealousy*. It is natural not to want a beloved partner in somebody else's arms; but it is equally *unnatural* if—no longer having sexual intercourse oneself with one's partner, as in a marriage or other relationship of long duration—one were to forbid the partner another relationship.

These few examples may suffice. Complicated as the personal and particularly the sexual life of people is today, it would regulate itself with the greatest simplicity if they were able fully to appreciate the pleasure in life. The essence of sex-economic regulation lies in the avoidance of any absolute norms or precepts and in the recognition of the will to life and pleasure in living as the regulators of social life. The fact that today, due to the disordered human structure, this recognition is reduced to a minimum does not speak against the principle of self-regulation; on the contrary, it speaks against the moral regulation which has created this pathological structure.

There are *two* kinds of "morality," but only *one* kind of moral regulation. That kind of "morality" which everybody acknowledges and affirms as a matter of course (not to rape, not to murder, etc.) can be established only on the basis of full gratification of the natural needs. But the other kind of "morality" which we refute (sexual abstinence for children and adolescents, compulsory marital fidelity, etc.) is in itself pathological and creates the very chaos which it professes to control. It is the arch-enemy of natural morality.

There are people who say that sex-economic living will destroy the family. They babble about the "sexual chaos" which would result from a healthy love life, and the masses are impressed by them because they are professors or the authors of best-sellers. One has to know what one is talking about. It is a matter, first of all, of eliminating the *economic* enslavement of women and children. And their *authoritarian* enslavement. Not until that is done will the husband love his wife, the wife the husband, and will parents and children love each other. They will no longer have any reason to hate each other. What we want to destroy is not the family, but the *hatred* which the family creates, the coercion, though it may take on the outward appearance of "love." If familial love is that great human possession it is made out to be, it will have to prove itself. If a dog which is chained to the house does not run away, nobody will, for this reason, call him a faithful companion. No sensible person will talk of love when a man cohabits with a woman who is bound hand and foot. No half-way decent man will be proud of the love of a woman whom he buys by supporting her or by power. No decent man will take love which is not given freely. Compulsive morality as exemplified in marital duty and familial authority is the morality of cowardly and impotent individuals who are incapable of experiencing through natural love capacity what they try to obtain in vain with the aid of the police and marriage laws.

These people try to put all humanity into their own strait-jacket because they are incapable of tolerating natural sexuality in others. It annoys them and fills them with envy, because they themselves would like to live that way and cannot. Far be it from us to force anybody to give up the familial life if he wants it; on the other hand, we do not want to let anybody force into it those who do not want it. Let him who can live in monogamy all his life and wants to, do so; he who cannot do it, who is going to be ruined by it, should have the opportunity to arrange his life differently. But if one wants to establish a "new kind of life" one has to know the contradictions inherent in the old one.

## CHAPTER II

### THE FAILURE OF CONSERVATIVE SEXUAL REFORM

Sexual reform aims to eliminate conditions in sexual life which, in the last analysis, are rooted in economic conditions and which express themselves in psychic illness. In authoritarian society, the conflict between a morality which is imposed on the total society by a minority in the interests of maintaining its power, on the one hand, and the sexual needs of the individual on the other, leads to a crisis which—within the existing social framework—is insoluble. Never in all the history of mankind, however, has this conflict led to such crass and cruel consequences as during the past three decades. Thus, there never was any other period during which sexual reform was so much discussed and written about. Nor any other during which all attempts at sexual reform failed as thoroughly as in this “age of technic and science.” The contrast between the devitalizing sexual misery and the enormous progress in sexology is a corollary to that other contrast between the economic misery of the working masses and the enormous technical advances of our industrial age. Or another contrast—which is again only seemingly paradoxical—that in this age of aseptic operations and highly developed surgery about 20,000 women in Germany died annually from abortions between 1920 and 1932 and that 75,000 women annually were seriously ill from infections after abortions. Or that, with increasing rationalization of production, more and more industrial workers were unemployed, their families physically and morally ruined. This contrast, far from being senseless, is quite intelligible if one does not try to comprehend it apart from the economic and social structure which creates it. We will have to show that sexual



misery as well as the impossibility of solving the sexual problem are both an integral part of the social order to which they owe their existence.

The sex-reform struggles are part of the cultural struggle in general. The Liberal, like Norman Haire, fights with his sexual reform against only one individual defect of this society, without wanting to criticize it otherwise. The Socialist, the "Reformist," attempts, by introducing sexual reforms, also to introduce a bit of socialism into the existing society. He tries to reverse the process of development by having the sexual reform take place before an alteration of the economic structure.

The reactionary will never understand that sexual misery is an integral part of the social order which he defends. He sees its cause either in human sinfulness, in some supernatural will or a no less mysterious will to suffer, or he believes that sexual misery exists simply because people do not follow his ascetic and monogamous demands. He cannot be expected to admit that he is an accomplice in the very thing which he himself, piously though perhaps honestly, tries to abolish with his reforms. The consequences of such an admission—even to himself—might shake his economic basis, the very basis from which he undertakes his reforms.

Conservative sexual reform has for decades been attempting to alleviate sexual misery. The problems of prostitution and venereal disease, of sexual misery, abortion and sexual murders, as well as the problem of the neuroses, are always in the center of public interest. Not one of the measures taken has so much as touched the prevailing sexual misery. More than that, what proposals for reform are made are always a few steps *behind* the actual changes which take place in the relations between the sexes. The decrease in marriages, the increase in divorces and adultery force a discussion of marriage reform; extramarital sexual relations become more and more a recognized fact, the views of ethically oriented sexologists notwithstanding; sexual intercourse among large sections of the youth between 15 and 18 is a general phenomenon; this at a time when the sexual reform movement

still debates the question whether sexual abstinence of adolescents should be continued beyond the age of 20, or the question whether masturbation is to be considered a normal manifestation. "Criminal" abortion and the use of contraceptives become more and more widespread, while the sexual reform movement debates whether, in addition to medical reasons, social factors should also be considered as indication for abortion.

So we see that the concrete changes in sex life are always far ahead of the negligible efforts of the sex reformers. This lag in the reform movement indicates that there is something basically wrong with these reform efforts; there is an inner contradiction which works like a brake mechanism and dooms all effort to become fruitless.

We are confronted with the task of finding out the hidden meaning of this fiasco of conservative sex reform. We will have to find out what links this kind of sex reform and its failure with the authoritarian social order. The connections are by no means simple. In particular, the problem of the formation of sexual ideologies is so complex as to require a special study.<sup>1</sup> Here, only a sector of the whole problem will be treated. We find here an interlacing of the following factors:

1. The institution of marriage as the brake on sexual reform.
2. The authoritarian family as the educational apparatus.
3. The demand for sexual abstinence of youth as the logical measure—from an authoritarian standpoint—for education to life-long, monogamous marriage and the authoritarian family.
4. The contradiction between conservative sexual reform and conservative marriage ideology.

Many of these connections have gone unnoticed, mainly because the critics of sexual reform concentrated their attention on the external forms of sex life (housing, abortion, marriage laws, etc.) while the sexual needs, mechanisms and experiences were largely overlooked. Little is to be added to this sociological criticism which in Europe came from such men as Hodann,

---

<sup>1</sup> Cf. DER EINBRUCH DER SEXUALMORAL AND MASSENPSYCHOLOGIE DES FASCHISMUS.

Hirschfeld, Brupbacher, Wolff and which was highlighted by the sexual revolution in Russia between 1918 and 1921.<sup>2</sup>

However, an evaluation of the psychic and cultural results of the authoritarian sexual order for the sexual economy of the individual and of society presupposes a knowledge of the psychic and somatic mechanisms of sexuality.

Our medical criticism, which has to be added to the sociological one, is based on character-analytic therapeutic experience and on the results of orgasm research.

---

<sup>2</sup> Cf., for example, the works of Genss on the problem of abortion in Russia; Wolfsohn: "Soziologie der Ehe und Familie"; Batkis: "Die sexuelle Revolution in der Sowjet-Union."

### CHAPTER III

## THE INSTITUTION OF MARRIAGE AS THE BASIS OF CONTRADICTIONS IN SEXUAL LIFE

The guiding interest in the sex reform movement is that of marital morality. Behind this, we have the conservative institution of marriage, and this in turn is firmly based on economic interests. The morality of marriage is the ultimate ideological exponent of economic factors in the ideological superstructure of society and as such permeates the thinking and acting of every conservative sex reformer and makes an actual sex reform impossible.

What is the connection between economic factors and morality of marriage? An immediate result of economic interests is the interest in the woman's premarital chastity and marital fidelity. The German sex hygienist, Gruber, was well aware of this ultimate and decisive motive when he wrote:

We have to cultivate woman's chastity as the highest national possession, for it is the only safe guarantee that we really are going to be the fathers of our children, that we work and labor for our own flesh and blood. Without this guarantee there is no possibility of a secure family life, this indispensable basis for the welfare of the nation. This, and not masculine selfishness, is the reason why the law and morals make stricter demands on the woman than on the man with regard to premarital chastity and to marital fidelity. Freedom on her part involves much more serious consequences than freedom on the part of the man.

(HYGIENE DES GESCHLECHTSLEBENS, 53-54. ed., p. 146-147)

Through the coupling of the inheritance laws with procreation,

the problem of marriage and the problem of sexuality have almost become one; the sexual union of two people is no longer a matter of sexuality. *Extramarital chastity* and *marital fidelity* on the part of the woman cannot be maintained for long without a considerable degree of sexual repression; from that follows the demand for chastity on the part of the girl. Originally—and this is still the case in certain primitive societies—the girl was free to live her own sexual life until marriage; only upon marriage did she become obligated to extramarital chastity.<sup>1</sup> In our society, particularly during the last decade of the 19th century, virginity became an absolute prerequisite of marriage. Premarital chastity and strict fidelity of the married woman became the two cornerstones of reactionary sex morality, which, by creating a sex-negative structure, help to support the authoritarian marriage and family.

So far, this ideology is the logical expression of economic interests. But here we see the contradiction in the process. The demand of premarital chastity deprives the male youth of love objects. This creates conditions which, though not intended by the existing social order, are inevitably a part of its sexual regime: monogamous marriage gives rise to *adultery*, and the chastity of the girls gives rise to *prostitution*. Adultery and prostitution are part and parcel of the double sexual morality which allows to the man, in marriage as well as before, what the woman, for economic reasons, must be denied. Due to the natural demands of sexuality, however, a strict sexual morality results in exactly the opposite of that which is intended. Immorality in the reactionary sense, that is, adultery and extramarital sex relations, grow into grotesque social phenomena: sexual perversion on the one hand, and mercenary sexuality, inside and outside of marriage, on the other. The mercenary character of sexual activity outside of marriage of necessity ruins the tender relationships between the sexes, most crassly in prostitution. The well-brought-up young man will, for example, split his sexuality. He will satisfy

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Bryk, "Negrereros" (Marcus and Webers, p. 77); Ploss-Bartels, *DAS WEIB*, and especially Malinowski, *THE SEXUAL LIFE OF SAVAGES*.

his sensuality with a girl of the "lower classes" while he bestows his affection and respect on a girl of his own social circles. This dissociation of love life and the linking of sexuality with money result in a complete degradation and brutalization of love life. One of the results is the widespread occurrence of venereal disease, which is also an essential though unintended part of the conservative sexual order. The fight against prostitution, extramarital sexual intercourse and venereal disease is carried on under the banner of "abstinence," corresponding to the concept that sexual intercourse is moral only in marriage; as a seeming proof of the evilness of extramarital sexual activity, they point to its alleged dangerousness.

The reactionary authors have to admit themselves that the insistence on sexual abstinence is not an efficient weapon against venereal disease. Though they are aware of the fact that marital morals are a blind alley, they see no way out of it. True, venereal diseases are caused by bacilli, but what they owe their widespread occurrence to is the degradation of extramarital sex life which is nothing but the counterpart of the socially sanctioned marital relationship. This is a contradiction to which the reactionary sexologist—as long as he wants to remain a part of his milieu—must, willy-nilly, give his ideological support.

In the question of abortion, one sees similar conflicts between the facts on the one hand and the demands which are made in support of marital morals and the institution of marriage on the other hand. One of the common arguments against the legalization of abortion is a "moral" one. After all, they say, the laws against abortion put the brakes on what otherwise might become an "altogether uninhibited sex life." They want to achieve an increased birthrate and actually achieve the opposite: a steadily declining birthrate. (The legalization of abortion in Soviet Russia did not lead to a decline of the birthrate, but, together with the attendant social measures, to an enormous increase). Why this concern for an increased birthrate?

It would be erroneous to assume that the wish for a large industrial reserve army is the motive here. That may have been

so when the unemployment of a definite, relatively small number of workers made it possible to keep down wage levels. But times have changed. The mass unemployment which has become characteristic of our times has made this motive unimportant. The immediate economic motives for the obstruction of rational contraceptive measures are insignificant compared with the ideological motives (which, it is true, also have their root, in the last analysis, in economic interests). The central motive in punishing abortion is the fear of the possible consequences of abolishing it, the fear of what it might do to "morality." If one were to legalize abortion, the legalization would apply not only in the case of married, but also of unmarried women. But that implies condoning extramarital relationships and relinquishing the moral compulsion to marry a girl if she has become pregnant. And that means undermining the institution of marriage. In spite of all the conflicting facts of sexual life, from an ideological point of view marital morality must be upheld. Why? Because it is the backbone of the authoritarian family, and this in turn is the place where authoritarian ideology and human structure are formed.

This is something which thus far has been largely overlooked in the discussion of the abortion problem. Some people might point out the possibility of legalizing abortion only for married but not for unmarried women. In this way, they might say, the interests of marriage would be safeguarded. This objection would be valid were it not for a certain piece of sexual ideology. According to conventional sex morality, *the sexual act is not supposed to be an act of sexual pleasure and gratification apart from reproduction*. Official sanctioning of the sexual act apart from reproduction would mean throwing overboard all officially accepted secular and ecclesiastical concepts of sexuality. Thus, for example, writes Max Marcuse in his compendium *DIE EHE* (in the chapter on "Contraception in Marriage"):

Should it become possible to sterilize women temporarily at will by internal medication, the most urgent task would be that of working out a method of distribution of these drugs which would make them

available where indicated for reasons of hygiene and at the same time safeguard against the enormous danger presented by them to sexual order and morality, more, to life and culture in general.

What one should add, of course, is the danger to *authoritarian* life and culture. German fascism, between 1933 and 1935, took into account this "danger" which the sex reformer Marcuse had formulated in 1927: About 1,500 sterilizations, though they contributed nothing to hygiene, averted this "enormous danger to sexual order and morality, life and culture." What is really meant by this "enormous danger" is the danger of separating sexuality and procreation.

Simple arithmetic shows what all this really means. No reasonable sex reformer can expect a poor woman to bear more than, say, five children. The authorities in sexology notwithstanding, man is by nature so constituted that he feels sexual excitation and wants sexual gratification though he may not have a marriage certificate, and that he feels the sexual urge on an average of every few days. That means, if he lives according to his biological needs and not according to conventional sexual morality, he has sexual intercourse from 3 to 4 thousand times between the ages of 14 and 50. Thus, if Marcuse were interested only in the preservation of the race, he would have to advocate a law according to which the woman may use contraceptives in 2,995 cases if only she does not use them the other five times, or as many times as is necessary to produce five children.

But the sex reformer is in reality not concerned about these "five" acts of reproduction. He is haunted by the fear that people, *with the sanction of the authorities*, might not only wish for 3,000 pleasurable sexual acts, but actually engage in them. Why is he haunted by this fear? For several reasons.

1. Because the *institution of marriage* is not geared to these natural facts and at the same time must be preserved as the cornerstone of the factory of authoritarian ideology, the family.

2. Because he could no longer evade the problem of *adolescent*



*sexuality*, a problem which today he slays with such slogans as “abstinence” or “sexual enlightenment.”

3. Because his theory of the *monogamous* constitution of the woman, or of people in general, would collapse completely in the face of biological and physiological facts.

4. Because he would inevitably get into serious conflicts with the church. These conflicts he can avoid only as long as he—like Van de Velde in his book, *IDEAL MARRIAGE*—propagates erotization *within* marriage, while at the same time carefully pointing out that his proposals are not at variance with ecclesiastical dogmata.

*The ideology of conventional morality is a cornerstone of the authoritarian institution of marriage; it is at variance with sexual gratification and presupposes a sex-negative attitude.* From this institution of marriage stems the impossibility of solving the problem of abortion.

## CHAPTER IV

# THE INFLUENCE OF CONSERVATIVE SEXUAL MORALITY

### 1. "OBJECTIVE, NON-POLITICAL" SCIENCE

The characteristic of conservative sexual ideology is the negation and degradation of sexuality which, in authoritarian society, is expressed in the process of *sexual repression*. It matters little what sexual needs are repressed, how far-reaching the repression is and what its results are in the individual case. What interests us here is the means employed in this process by "public opinion," an important part of which is formed by conservative sexology, and what its results are in general.

The most important exponent of the ideological atmosphere is *conservative sexology*. This will be shown in detail in discussing the problems of marriage and of adolescent sexuality; here we want only to cite some typical illustrations of the moralistically prejudiced attitude of a sexology which pretends to be objective.

In Marcuse's *HANDWÖRTERBUCH DER SEXUALWISSENSCHAFT*, a work which is undoubtedly representative of official sexology, Timerding writes the following:

The whole concept of sexuality has always been determined by a general ethical attitude. Suggestions for reform are almost always justified by ethical principles (p. 710).

The real importance of the ethical viewpoint in sexology lies in the fact that it teaches one to view sexual manifestations in the larger framework of total personality development and the social order (p. 712).

As we know, what is meant by social order is the *reactionary* social order, and by personality development is meant the de-

velopment of a personality which is capable of *adjusting* to *that* order. Every reactionary social morality is of necessity sex-negative, no matter what concessions it may make in view of the actualities of sexual life, no matter the extent to which the sex life that the ruling classes lead and foster deviates from its principles. Due to their inner contradictions, many authors arrive at formulations which are at variance with the social atmosphere. In a practical sense, however, this scientific counterweight never has any effect; there is never any action which would transgress the confines set up by reactionary society. The result is inconsistency, often even absurdity. Thus, Wiese writes in Marcuse's *HANDWÖRTERBUCH*:

Over and above religious asceticism, there is, particularly in our times, much asceticism, that is, abstinence on principle, the motives of which stem from philosophy, ethics, practical social considerations, weak eroticism, psychic or physical, an inclination toward spiritualism, or a mixture of all of these with inherited religious instincts. Often one thinks one is capable of lifting human intercourse to a higher plane only under conditions of abstinence. . . . This modern asceticism . . . is only rarely of the same high value as genuine religious asceticism. It is the result of satiation or a low vitality which is incapable of tolerating the pathos or the variety of sensuality.

With regard to any form or degree of abstinence, the observation is valid that a strong natural instinct cannot be eliminated; it can only be diverted and altered. Abstinence "represses" the sexual drive. Much as one has to guard against the exaggerations of Freud's school, one has to acknowledge the validity of the theory of the repression of the sexual instinct through abstinence. Much fanaticism, queerness, hatred and unchastity of phantasy life may result from abstinence.

A natural instinct for abstinence (not to be confused with a temporary decrease of the urge or its decrease with advancing age) does not exist in the healthy human. Asceticism is essentially of social, not biological origin. Occasionally, it is an adaptation to unnatural living conditions, occasionally a pathological ideology.

On the whole, these are correct statements. But any possible practical consequences are precluded by such things as a dis-

inction between religious asceticism and asceticism of another kind; this distinction obscures the fact that religious asceticism, too, springs from an "inclination toward mysticism" and not from "inherited religious instincts." By postulating "religious instincts," Wiese leaves a backdoor open through which asceticism can sneak in again after having thrown it out by the correct finding that it is of social origin and that in the healthy human there is no such thing as a "natural instinct for abstinence."

Another moralistic backdoor of official sexology is the talk of the "lifting to a higher spiritual plane" of sexual relations. What happened is this: Originally, one condemned sensuality; but the repressed forces returned, in all kinds of pathological forms. What was to be done with these forces which now, even more than before, conflicted with a "moral," i.e., ascetic and chaste way of living? Only one thing was left: "lifting sexuality to a higher spiritual plane." This slogan of a large sector of the sex reform movement means, no matter what vague phrases are used, something very concrete: nothing but renewed repression and inhibition of sexuality.

The mixture of factual findings and sexual morality, so typical of conservative sexology, results in the most absurd statements. Thus, Timerding writes:

If one denies to the unmarried woman the right to love, one also has to demand premarital sexual abstinence of the man. *True, complete premarital chastity, if it could be made a fact, would be the best guarantee for the continuation of society and would relieve the individual of much suffering. If, however, this demand remains an ordeal, achieved only in rare instances* [italics mine, W.R.], very little is achieved. The *ideal of chastity* should become a norm of *individual ethics*; this, however, becomes more and more unlikely, especially as the chances of getting married soon after sexual maturity become increasingly poor. As long as the demand for chastity is only a demand of *social ethics*, for the protection of the family, the individual is apt to shake it off as nothing but an annoying compulsion.

It is significant that this concept has failed completely in the face of modern living and that in practice it has almost become a farce.

We have here the following inconsistencies: If the woman is supposed to live in premarital abstinence, why not the man? Correct. The establishment of the ideal of chastity as a norm of individual ethics becomes more and more unlikely. Correct. Nevertheless, the ideal of chastity "should" be established, even though "this concept has failed completely . . . and . . . has become a farce." That "premarital chastity is the best guarantee for the continuation of society" is one of these phrases which are again and again repeated, without there ever being offered any proof for the statement. However, as we know, the statement is correct if we keep in mind that it refers to authoritarian society. Further:

In the *hygienic* evaluation of sexuality there are two opposite views. One group points to the psychic and physical harm which results from the suppression of sexuality and logically asks for a healthy sex life independent of economic conditions. Other groups violently defend the harmlessness of complete sexual abstinence while pointing to the dangers to health of a disorderly sex life, particularly to the widespread and dangerous venereal diseases. . . . The only sure prevention is, in fact, total abstinence. Since this, however, can be demanded only in exceptional cases, one comes back to the ideal of sexual intercourse in *strictly monogamous marriage*. *Absolute realization of this ideal would completely fulfill the desired goal* [italics mine, W.R.]. The venereal diseases would rapidly decrease. *But this ideal, too, will hardly ever be realized* [italics mine, W.R.]. In addition, keeping marriage protected would be of little help, since the greatest danger of infection is before marriage. Thus, only a *general sharpening of conscience* in sexual matters can help, in that it prevents at least incautious and frequently changing sexual relations. One could even imagine that the liberation of sexual relations, based on strong personal affection, from the present social and legal restrictions would foster the establishment of possibly lasting relationships; that it would eliminate public and clandestine prostitution and thus considerably decrease not only venereal disease, but other psychic and physical dangers. The fact cannot be denied that people of both sexes with a natural sexual urge never let themselves be deterred by the demands of official mores. On the other hand, one may well adhere to the ideal of establishing

sexual relationships only with one partner who gives lasting full physical and emotional satisfaction. For there is no doubt that he who succeeds in doing so can only be called fortunate.

We see that the conservative sex reformer himself gets close to the practical solution of the misery. But he cannot get rid of the ideology of compulsive monogamy; it warps his judgment and forces him into a blind alley: "On the other hand, one may well adhere to the ideal . . ." for "he who succeeds can only be called fortunate." That may be so, but who does succeed? And is not the sex moralist the very one who has proclaimed the fiasco of the ideal? Here, too, the conflict is explained by the economic basis of the ideal and the impossibility of its realization in a sex-economic manner.

Thus one oscillates back and forth between the ideology of chastity and that of marriage because between the two looms the specter of "venereal disease" which one cannot manage because it is the practical counterpart of marital morality and the ideology of chastity. True, the sexologist himself finds that "the liberation of sexual relations from social and legal restrictions would foster lasting relationships, eliminate prostitution and decrease venereal disease." But, society as it is, cannot do without "moral order" and "compulsion." Thus, there remains nothing but "a general sharpening of conscience."

This task was undertaken by the great authority in the field of sexual hygiene, Professor Gruber. He writes:

"The pleasure of the creature is mixed with bitterness." The reader, undoubtedly, has seen many a confirmation of this statement by Meister Eckhart. And yet, we have not even begun a detailed discussion of the worst evils which may result from sexual intercourse.

(HYGIENE DES GESCHLECHTSLEBENS, p. 121)

"The pleasure of the creature is mixed with bitterness." Correct. But nobody who makes such statements thinks of asking whether this bitterness is of social or of biological origin. The phrase, "*Omne animal post coitum triste*" ("Every creature is sad

after sexual intercourse”) has become a scientific dogma. One has to know that such statements, made by “authorities,” have a profound influence on those who listen reverently to the words of “authorities” like Gruber. This influence is so profound that the listeners not only falsify their own perceptions (which would contradict the statement), but also, fogged by this high-sounding talk, stop thinking for themselves. Otherwise, they would have to come to grips with the social situation in which pleasure and bitterness are *inevitably* mixed.

One has to know the reactions of an adolescent who reads, for example, the following statements made by such a sexological authority as Fürbringer:

New tasks present themselves in adolescence, in the first place the medical attitude toward sexual intercourse with its dangers to general health and of infection. It is no longer a secret that in our modern society the majority of men engage in sexual intercourse before marriage. We do not have to take up the question as to what extent society tolerates—not to say approves—these habits.

(HANDWÖRTERBUCH, p. 718)

The adolescent takes in the following suggestion:

1. The medical attitude, that is, that attitude for which the layman has the greatest respect, is that sexual intercourse “damages general health.” He who has experienced the reaction of youngsters to such statements, has seen how they fall prey to sexual conflict, neurosis and hypochondriasis, and how these statements combine with infantile experiences to produce neuroses, will agree with us that such statements call not only for protest, but practical countermeasures.

2. The physician states that infection may take place. Gruber states that every woman who has premarital or extramarital intercourse is suspect. Of course, there would be the solution of having sexual intercourse only with a partner one knows well and loves; further, one might agree with one’s partner on faithfulness for the duration of the relationship; or to agree not to have intercourse for several weeks after intercourse with another partner.

In these and other ways the bugaboo of venereal disease could be eliminated. But where does that leave "morality"? Since Gruber, Fürbringer and other scientists of their ideology look at any extramarital relationship through brothel glasses, as Engels once put it, they fit completely into the atmosphere of reactionary sexual ideology and are able to come forth with "moral" admonitions like the following. Gruber writes:

In view of the loathsomeness and dangers of prostitution, a great many young people will be tempted to seek gratification in a so-called "affair" until such time as they are able to get married. They should take to heart the following: Such an affair would provide complete protection from infection only in the case of a virgin and if there were strict mutual faithfulness; considering the high incidence of venereal disease, *any* polygamous intercourse, as pointed out before, is highly dangerous. From a girl, however, who lowers herself to such an "affair," without pangs of conscience, maybe even for gain, disguised as it may be, faithfulness cannot be expected. If, as is so often the case, she has already gone from hand to hand, she is hardly less dangerous than the professional prostitute. Another thing the young man who is filled with the ambition to strive for higher things should keep in mind: living with a girl who is below him intellectually and emotionally, who does not understand his ambitions and who knows only shallow amusements, will lower his own cultural level. Such a "love affair" defiles *psychically* much more than does the occasional visit to a prostitute which is of the nature of a necessary evacuation, like visiting a public toilet.

(HYGIENE DES GESCHLECHTSLEBENS, p. 142-43)

"A virgin" would protect against venereal infection, writes Gruber. But in order to make sure that a young man will not choose this way, he continues:

To seduce an honorable, high-minded girl into a "temporary love affair" is an irresponsible undertaking even if it takes place with complete honesty with regard to the final intentions.

I will not even mention the fact that the act of deflowering in itself does harm to the girl in that it makes marriage more difficult for



her later on because the man, with a correct instinct, prefers the untouched woman for a wife.

The main thing is that this is not possible without damage or deep wounding to the woman's soul. The wish for motherhood is inborn in the good woman. Only when sexual intercourse holds for her the promise of becoming a mother does it make her really happy. He who introduces a woman, with detestable tricks, to sexual intercourse, deprives her of the hour of supreme happiness which an honorable marriage would have brought her with the first unbounded embraces (p. 144-45).

In this way, statements of "scientific fact" are made in the interest of the institution of marriage: "Only the prospect of motherhood makes sexual intercourse a happy experience." We are familiar with this statement from the analyses of frigid, sex-negative women. And what the "first unbounded embraces in an honorable marriage" look like we also learn from the therapy of women who have fallen ill as a result of the "honorable marriage."

Who could be better equipped for such a sex-moralistic mass indoctrination than a famous university professor? Reactionary society is clever in picking its prophets.

The pinnacle of dangerous utilization of "scientific authority" in the service of reactionary ideology was Gruber's contention that sexual abstinence was not only not harmful, but highly useful, because the semen, in abstinence, was re-absorbed and provided a "source of protein." "There cannot be any question of a harmful effect of retaining the semen in the organism, for the semen is not a harmful excrement like urine and feces." True, Gruber hesitated to let this nonsense stand without qualification. He wrote:

True, one might think that the absorption of semen would be useful only if it does not go beyond certain limits, that too much absorption might be harmful. To this objection, the following is to be said: Nature, by way of the involuntary nocturnal emissions—which, if not too frequent, are quite normal—has seen to it that no excessive accumulation occurs. In addition, the secretion of semen *decreases auto-*

*matically when the sexual apparatus is not used.* The testicles act in this respect like any other part of the organism. *If they are not being used*, less blood flows to them, and with that *they suffer a decrease in their nourishment and their general vitality.* In this way, also, harm is prevented [italics mine, W.R.].

These sentences deserve to be read very carefully. What Gruber here openly says in so many words, is the essence of all reactionary sexology: In the interest of the moral order, of culture, and of the state, one advocates the atrophy of the sexual apparatus. If we had made such a statement without documentary proof, nobody would have believed us. What Gruber expresses here is the essence of reactionary sexology: *sexual atrophy!* This being so, one is not surprised to find that over 90 per cent of the women and over 60 per cent of the men are sexually disturbed and that the neuroses are a *mass* problem.

If one takes recourse to such things as "absorption of the semen as a source of protein," nocturnal emissions and atrophy of the testicles, then there is only one more step to castration as an active measure. But then such "objective" science would eliminate itself, to the detriment of "human betterment" and "cultural progress." In the form of fascist sterilization, this flower of our "culture" has become a reality.

Since Gruber's *HYGIENE DES GESCHLECHTSLEBENS* had printings of 400,000 copies, that is, was read by at least one million people, predominantly adolescents, its influence as a social factor is readily apparent. It created, as the external frustrating factor, at least that many cases of impotence and neurosis.

One might object that it is unfair to quote Gruber alone, that the majority of sexologists did not identify themselves with him. But, one may be allowed to ask, who of these sexologists, who allegedly do not identify themselves with Gruber, wrote anything against him in an attempt to counteract his influence? I am not referring to the papers on masturbation and emissions which gather dust in scientific journals. What I mean is a consistent translation of scientific conviction into action. For example, the

publication of popular pamphlets as a countermeasure against the hundreds of thousands of pieces of sexual trash literature written by sexologically ignorant physicians who exploit people's hunger for sexual knowledge to fill their pockets with royalties. Such bugaboos as "venereal disease" and "masturbation" cannot be fought with esoteric treatises. Neither can one hide behind consideration for one's colleagues and so-called "medical ethics." No, the problem is elsewhere. Those who do not identify themselves with Gruber's clear-cut views will nevertheless hesitate to follow their correct views and scientific convictions to their logical conclusion and to put them on paper. For doing so will inevitably lead them beyond the limited confines of conservative knowledge, and with that, outside the pale of their conventional society. And that is a risk they are loath to take.

True, there were various attempts to counter these views. But they were lukewarm or nothing but platitudes. The following is an illustration:

Similarly, in the interest of a more just evaluation and the avoidance of the only too frequent social ostracism in connection with sexual processes, a more general knowledge of the physiological and psychological basis of sexual life would be desirable. For the recognition of one's own emotions and the actions determined by them, the acquaintance with scientifically established facts may also be of great significance. One has to hope confidently that advancing culture, in particular when it spreads not only in its individual aspects but also to its full content, will, in the end, not lead to a deterioration of sexual habits after all, but to their refinement and increased nobility.

(H. E. Timerding, *HANDWÖRTERBUCH*, p. 713)

The knowledge of the basis of sexual life "would be desirable" (*not* "is essential"); the acquaintance with scientific facts "may be of significance" (*not* "is"); "one has to hope confidently" . . . "deterioration of sexual habits . . . their refinement and increased nobility." Nothing but empty phrases.

But this deplorable state of affairs goes deeper than this: the findings and the theory formation themselves are moralistically

prejudiced. This is the case even with authors who in other fields do not show this conservative prejudice. Small wonder, since the sexual ideology is the most deeply anchored of all conservative ideologies.

It is a well-known fact that frigidity in women is based on an inhibition of vaginal feeling, and that, when this inhibition is eliminated, vaginal excitation and orgasmic potency return. Yet, in a popular pamphlet, "Neuland der Liebe—Soziologie des Geschlechtslebens" by Paul Krische, we read the following:

The only point of sexual excitation and gratification in the woman is the clitoris, and not, as is still contended even by scientists and physicians, also the inside of the vagina and the uterus. For sexual excitation presupposes the corpora cavernosa and the Krause bodies, and these are found only in the clitoris. Thus neither uterus nor vagina can convey sexual pleasure sensations, particularly since they also serve as the birth canal for the child. . . . In order not to make childbirth unbearably painful, nature made the sensitive part, the clitoris, become smaller, . . . so that the outlet of the vagina became insensitive. . . . In this way, nature created that conflict which within the history of humanity she was unable to solve: by making the vaginal outlet insensitive in order to make childbirth possible, she also prevented the desirable satisfaction of woman in coitus (p. 10).

Krische states further that in the Germanic race "at least 60 per cent of the women never, or only rarely, reach satisfaction in coitus."<sup>1</sup> This he ascribes to the allegedly greater distance between clitoris and vagina in this race. Nevertheless, on the same page, conservative morality gets its due:

The most favorable age for bearing children is between 20 and 25. In order to prevent premature pregnancies, nature has established the low sexual excitability of the girl as a protective measure.

One might ask why nature then was so clumsy as not to postpone ovulation (i.e., the maturing of the eggs) also until the age

<sup>1</sup> One might ask, then, how is it possible for the other 40 per cent of women to experience satisfaction after all, if the arrangements of nature make it impossible?

of 20 or 25. One might ask further why this modern God "nature" has not provided this protection to the large percentage of girls who, in spite of everything, suffer severely from sexual excitation. In addition, we know that girls masturbate not only at the age of 14, but at the age of 3 and 4, that they play with dolls and wish to have babies by their fathers—in spite of the fact that "nature" considers the age of 20 or 25 the "appropriate" age. Could this "nature" possibly be the economic position of woman in our society and "good behavior" in sexual matters? For how about Negro and Croatian girls of 14? Has nature forgotten to provide for them?

Objectively, such theories are nothing but manoeuvres to distract scientific interest from the true social and psychic causes of sexual disturbances.

*The predominantly or exclusively biologicistic concept of the sexual urge as being in the service of procreation is a method of repression on the part of conservative sexology.* It is a finalistic, i.e., idealistic concept. It presupposes a goal which of necessity must be of a supernatural origin. It reintroduces a metaphysical principle and thus betrays a religious or mystical prejudice.

## 2. MARITAL MORALITY AS THE INHIBITING FACTOR IN ANY KIND OF SEXUAL REFORM

### a) *Helene Stöcker.*

In the preceding section we have tried to show that what leads any kind of conventional sex reform into a blind alley is the institution of marriage and the belief in its biological nature; that all sexual misery can be logically reduced to the ideology of marriage by way of which authoritarian society decisively influences all sexual activity. Even the best and most progressive among the sex reformers—though their program may be correct from the standpoint of sex-economy—all of them fail at this point. And that is what makes their programs sterile and hopeless.

The German sex reform movement has been smashed. But in all other countries it is making headway, even though burdened with all the contradictions which stem from the denial of

adolescent sexuality. The discussion to follow applies equally to any kind of progressive liberal sex reform.

The *Deutsche Bund für Mutterschutz und Sexualreform* (German Society for the Protection of Mothers and for Sex Reform), the guiding spirit of which was Helene Stöcker, published its "Richtlinien" (guiding lines) which were drawn up and accepted in 1922. We first quote the "Richtlinien," which in principle are sound from a sex-economic point of view.

#### RICHTLINIEN

des

Deutschen Bundes für Mutterschutz und Sexualreform

#### 1. Content and aim of the movement.

This movement grows on the soil of a joyous, life-affirming Weltanschauung, out of the conviction of the value and sanctity of human life.

It attempts to make life between man and woman, parents and children, and people in general, as rich and fruitful as possible.

Our task is, therefore, to carry to ever larger numbers of people the realization of how ugly are the social conditions and ethical concepts which not only tolerate but foster prostitution, venereal disease, sexual hypocrisy and enforced abstinence.

The confusion in today's moral values and the resulting personal sufferings and social evils call for relief. This, however, cannot be achieved by eliminating symptoms, but only by the eradication of the real causes.

But our movement wants not only to eliminate evils; it also wants to help in a positive manner toward a fulfilment of personal social life. Our goal is 1) to protect life at its source: *maternal health*; and 2) to make sexuality a potent instrument not only of procreation, but of individual development and joy in life: *sex reform*.

#### 2. The general principle of morality.

The first prerequisite for healthier human and sexual relationships is the elimination of those moral concepts which base their demands

on allegedly supernatural commands, on arbitrary human regulations, or simply on tradition. Ethics, too, should be based on the findings of advancing *science*. We cannot thoughtlessly let something remain a moral demand that was true in earlier times and only served the purpose of certain classes. To us, the touchstone of what is "moral" is whether it leads to a richer and more harmonious life, individual and social.

Thus we reject the concept that body and mind are two antithetical things. We do not want to see natural sexual attraction stamped as "sin," "sensuality," fought as something low and beastly, and the "conquering of the flesh" made the guiding principle of morality! To us, man is a unitary being whose psychic and physical needs have an equal right to healthy development and care.

*Moral precepts* are really only such as arise of necessity from the conditions of peaceful social living where everybody has equal rights and the optimal opportunities for the development of their capacities. "Moral" to us is that which, under given conditions, best serves the development of the individual personality and better forms of social living.

### 3. Sexual morals.

Our governing moral concepts and social conditions breed sexual hypocrisy, physical disease and other ailments. We consider it our task, therefore, to make the widest circle of people realize the intolerability of such conditions and the confusion in such concepts, and to fight such concepts and conditions with all our might. We do not want "virtue" confused with "abstinence" nor do we want to tolerate one kind of morality for the man and another for the woman.

*Sexual intercourse* as such is neither moral nor immoral. Based on a natural urge, it becomes one or the other only through accompanying circumstances and people's attitude. The significance of sexuality goes beyond procreation, though this is its most important effect. Rather, a sexual life which corresponds to a person's individuality and needs is the prerequisite of a person's inner and outer harmony in life. It presupposes, inherently, another personality, to be won by the forces of attraction. Then, love life opens a wealth of new possibilities of living and experiencing, ways to a greater depth and refinement of one's view of life and one's knowledge of people—the only way, finally, to full creative being in *motherhood* and *fatherhood*.

We have quoted so extensively because we identify ourselves essentially with what was said; but also in order to make a contradiction stand out more clearly. Under "Content and aim of the movement," the necessity of the "eradication of the real causes" of sexual misery is pointed out; that "morality" serves the purposes of certain classes is recognized and stated; that "a sexual life which corresponds to a person's individuality and needs is the prerequisite of a person's inner and outer harmony in life" is in complete accord with sex-economic findings. But—already with the formulation that this is the only way to "full creative being in motherhood and fatherhood," a thesis is smuggled in which is unproved and incapable of proof and which introduces a statement which suddenly nullifies everything that went before. It is the point at which thus far any treatment of sexuality has failed, to wit, the problem of youth and marriage.

We consider it necessary that the youth of both sexes be hardened, be educated to self-discipline and to respect of the other sex and its task; in particular, that the male youth should, at an early time, learn and practice consideration of the human dignity of the woman, of her psychic and emotional life. *We demand, therefore, abstinence until the time of complete physical and psychic maturity.* We recognize, however, the natural right of adult people, man or woman, to sexual intercourse corresponding to their needs, provided it takes place with the full realization of the responsibility for the possible consequences and without intrusion on the *rights* of other people (for example, to sexual faithfulness).

Here, we have the following contradictions with what was said before:

1. Consideration for the "human dignity" of the woman. That this is not simply one of those old phrases about female sexuality, is immediately made clear by the succeeding sentence:

2. "We demand, *therefore*, abstinence until the time of complete physical and psychic maturity."

The question is not asked why the sexual act is an insult to woman's "human dignity"; whether that is true generally, in the



abstract, or only today, in this society, and why. Further, there is no statement as to *when* youth may be regarded as physically and psychically mature, or what are the criteria of such maturity. Obviously, adolescents reach physical maturity around the average age of 14 or 15; they are then capable of procreation. Psychic maturity they reach at various ages, depending on their early and later environment. Already a number of contradictions, which are not solved but created by such a general formulation of "physical and psychic maturity."

3. "Recognition of the natural right of adult people to sexual intercourse." When are they "adult"? "Provided that it takes place without intrusion on the rights of other people, for example, to sexual faithfulness." That means: the husband has a right to the body of his wife and vice versa. What right? Only that which is given him by the legal institution of marriage, and no other. A point of view which is exactly that of reactionary law and that of the very ideology against which the drafters of the RICHTLINIEN profess to fight.

The next contradiction:

We do not see the essence of marriage and its "morality" in the fulfilment of certain formalities. Present-day concepts leave the motives for a marital union out of consideration, just as long as the prescribed form is adhered to. All love relationships which bear the rubber stamp of formal correctness—and only these—are considered "moral." All others are considered "immoral," without any consideration of their inner justification, their value and voluntary responsibility. Finally, in accordance with these concepts, people are forced by law to continue their marriage even when they feel that living together has no longer any meaning or purpose, when it has become nothing but a torture, or even when they have ceased to live together.

Well and good. But:

*We consider legally recognized monogamous marriage the highest and most desirable form of human sex relations.* Better than anything else, it will guarantee a lasting regulation of sexual intercourse, the

healthy development of the family and the maintenance of human society. We do not fail to recognize, however, that lifelong, strictly monogamous marriage is, and has always been, an ideal achieved by a few only. In fact, the larger part of sex life takes place *before marriage and outside of it*. Legally bound marriage is incapable, both for *psychic* and *economic* reasons, of *absorbing* all the possibilities of *justified love relationships*, that is, incapable of developing them, in all cases, into a lasting "one-marriage."

Thus, one advocates "legally recognized monogamous marriage," while at the same time one "does not fail to recognize" that lifelong monogamous marriage is, and has always been, an ideal achieved by only a few, and that the larger part of sex life takes place extramatrimonially. The people who defend the institution of marriage on principle never think of inquiring about its history and social function. They can decree that it is the best of all forms of sex relations—and can state the exact opposite in the same breath. Thus, there is small wonder that their reforms are exhausted in such vague, platitudinous phrases as the following:

Consequently we advocate the following:

a) *Preservation* of legally recognized monogamous marriage based on an actual equality of the sexes; the furtherance of the *economic* possibilities for marrying, but also of the *psychic* possibilities through education for marriage and parenthood, coeducation and other measures for a better and deeper "getting-to-know-each-other" between the sexes;

b) More liberal *divorce* laws in cases where the conditions which led to the marriage no longer exist, further, when the marriage no longer fulfils the purposes of a lasting companionship (in particular, replacing the principle of guilt by that of incompatibility);

c) Moral and legal recognition of relationships in which the awareness of responsibility for the consequences is present and proven—even when the legal formalities are not complied with;

d) Fight against "Prostitution" by sanitary measures and *psychic* and *economic* means for the elimination of its causes.

1. The "*actual equality of the sexes*," in authoritarian society, is nothing but an empty phrase. It would require a democratic economy and a person's right to his own body. If these conditions were given, however, marriage in its present form would automatically cease to exist.

2. *The furtherance of economic possibilities for marrying* also remains an empty phrase under the present conditions of production. Who is to do the furthering? The very society which is interested in the perpetuation of the present mode of production?

3. *Education for marriage*: This is something which, in reality, is taking place all the time, beginning in infancy. It is against the very results of this education that the *Bund* was established. An institution which requires sex repression for its maintenance, is *a priori* at variance with "coeducation" and a "deeper getting-to-know-each-other" of the sexes, if these are not again to become empty phrases.

4. "*More liberal divorce laws*" in themselves mean little. Either the economic position of the woman and the children is such that a divorce is economically impossible. In this case a "liberalization of divorce laws" does no good. Or the conditions of production change in such a manner that economic independence of the woman and social care of the children becomes possible. In that case, the termination of a sexual companionship will no longer meet any external difficulties, anyhow.

5. *Fighting the causes of prostitution*. The causes are unemployment and the ideology of chastity for the "well-brought-up" girls. To fight this, it takes more than sanitary measures. Who is going to take these measures? The same reactionary society which is incapable of managing unemployment and depends for its existence on the ideology of chastity?

Sexual misery cannot be overcome by such measures. It is an essential part of the existing social structure.

*b) Auguste Forel.*

None among the socialist sexologists has stressed more than Forel the hygienic damages of the mercenary aspects of the

sexual function. He recognized all the basic sexual difficulties which spring from the authoritarian way of living, without, it is true, comprehending the deeper economic roots of sexual misery. Correspondingly, his findings result in lamentations instead of practical consequences, in well-meaning bits of advice instead of the realization of the specific connection between sexual misery and prevailing social structure. As might be expected, his ideological prejudice expressed itself in contradictions in his own views. As long as it was a matter of generalizations, his ethical point of view, as expressed in his pamphlet, *SEXUELLE ETHIK*, was that "the gratification of the sexual instinct, in man and woman, is, all in all, not a matter of ethics." Thus he wrote, "We boldly state that any sexual intercourse which does no harm to either of the partners nor to third persons or to the quality of a possibly resulting child . . . cannot be immoral" . . . "As long as they do no harm, one has to tolerate these acts, all the more in that happiness and healthy joyous work often depend on a normal instinctual gratification" (p. 20). Magnificent sentences, considering the times in which they were penned. After stating that the man "usually has a polygamous constitution" (betraying the influence of double sexual morality which beclouds the finding of facts), Forel gives the following advice:

*The ethical sexual ideal is definitely the monogamous marriage based on mutual and lasting love and faithfulness and blessed with children. . . .* This is not as rare an occurrence as our modern pessimists contend, but it is also not of very frequent occurrence. In order that this marriage be what it can and should be, it has to be absolutely free; that means, both partners must be absolutely equal; there must be no external compulsion to keep it together, such as the responsibility toward the children. That means, in the first place, separate property rights for husband and wife and proper evaluation of any kind of work on the part of the woman as well as the man.

But in that case, marriage eliminates itself, for Forel's last postulate takes away its very basis, the sexual and economic

suppression of the woman. And in practice, this is what it looks like (letter from a patient seeking advice):

Polygamous conflict: "For quite some time, I have had a passion for another woman. I try to fight it in vain. As a married man, possessing the dearest spouse with whom I have been living peaceably for 32 years. . . . I well realize that such a liaison would be in no way justified or even excusable. Nevertheless, I find myself again and again too weak to resist this passion."

"Suggestion is to be tried first in combating this." "*In such cases,*" Forel continues, "*it is difficult to give advice.*" Indeed it is difficult, considering the fact that every member of conservative society has it constantly dinned into him that a relationship with another woman is "in no way justified or even excusable."

*c) The end of the World League for Sexual Reform.*

During the late '20s, the liberal humanist and socialist Magnus Hirschfeld had organized his work in the form of the *World League for Sexual Reform*. This body comprised the then most progressive sexologists and sex reformers of the world. Its program contained the following points:

1. Political, economic and sexual equality of woman.
2. Liberation of marriage (in particular, of divorce) from the influence of church and state.
3. Birth control in the sense of responsible procreation.
4. Eugenic measures for the insurance of healthy progeny.
5. Protection of unmarried mothers and children born out of wedlock.
6. Correct evaluation of intersexual variants, especially of homosexual men and women.
7. Prevention of prostitution and venereal disease.
8. The concept of sexual disturbances as pathological manifestations instead of as crime, sin or vice.
9. A sexual penal law which would punish only actual encroachments on the sexual freedom of another person, but would

not interfere with sexual activities engaged in by mutual consent of adult individuals.

#### 10. Planned sexual education and information.

The Danish sex-economist, Dr. Leunbach, who was one of the three presidents of the WLSR, has described the great merits of the World League, at the same time giving a relevant criticism of its contradictions.<sup>2</sup> The main points of his criticism were in regard to the attempts of the World League to carry out its sexual reform "unpolitically"; its liberalistic generosity which went as far as leaving it to each country to let themselves be guided by their respective laws; the neglect of infantile and adolescent sexuality; and the affirmation of the existing institution of compulsive marriage.

After the death of Hirschfeld, Norman Haire and Leunbach published the following declaration:

To all members and sections of the World League for Sexual Reform:

We, Dr. Norman Haire, London, and Dr. Leunbach, Copenhagen, the surviving presidents of the WLSR, are in the sad position of having to announce the death of our first president, Magnus Hirschfeld. He died in Nice, on May 14, 1935.

What we would like to do would be to call a congress to consider the fate of the WLSR. This seems unfeasible for the same reason for which it was impossible to call a new international congress since the last one in Brno in 1932. Political and economic conditions in Europe have made impossible not only international congresses, but also further work of the WLSR in many countries. The French section no longer exists, the Spanish section has ceased all activity since the death of Hildegart, as have most sections in other countries. As far as we can establish, the English section is the only one which continues to function actively.

In the absence of an international congress, the two surviving presidents see themselves forced to the realization that the continuation of the WLSR as an international organization is no longer possible.

<sup>2</sup> "Von der bürgerlichen Sexualreform zur revolutionären Sexualpolitik." *Zeitschr. f. Polit. Psychol. u. Sexualök.* 2, 1935.

For this reason, we declare the World League for Sexual Reform to be dissolved. The individual sections will have to decide for themselves whether they want to continue to function as independent organizations or whether they want to dissolve.

Among the members of the various sections, considerable differences of opinion have arisen as to the extent to which the League should continue its original non-political character. Some members are of the opinion that it is impossible to reach the goals of the WLSR without at the same time fighting for a socialist revolution.

Dr. Haire insists that all revolutionary activity should be kept out of the program of the WLSR. Dr. Leunbach is of the opinion that the WLSR cannot achieve anything because it has not joined the revolutionary workers' movement nor is in a position to do so. Dr. Leunbach's point of view has been published in the *Zeitschr. f. Polit. Psychol. u. Sexualök.*, 2, 1935, No. 1, Dr. Haire's answer in No. 2.

Now that the World League for Sexual Reform has been dissolved, the members of the various sections are free to decide these problems for themselves.

NORMAN HAIRE

J. H. LEUNBACH

This was the end of an organization which attempted the liberation of sexuality *within the framework of reactionary society*.

### 3. THE BLIND ALLEY OF SEX EDUCATION

The present crisis of education in general and of sexual education in particular has set into focus the question whether children should get sexual information, whether one should accustom them to the sight of the naked human body, more specifically, of the human genitals. There is a consensus of opinion—at least in circles not directly under the influence of the church—that secrecy about sexual matters does far more harm than good. True, there is a decent and strong intention to put an end to the present desperate state of affairs in education. But there are also striking disagreements among the educational reformers, disagreements which can be traced to two sources: personal and

social. I shall discuss only a few of the fundamental difficulties which make themselves felt whenever nakedness and sex information are put forward as an aim.

Among the infantile sexual impulses, those aiming at the observation and the display of the genitals are particularly well known. Under present educational conditions, these impulses are usually repressed at a very early time. As a result of this repression, children develop two different feelings: First, they develop guilt feelings because they know that they are doing something strictly forbidden if they give in to their impulses. Second, the fact that the genitals are covered up and "taboo" gives a mystic air to everything sexual. Consequently, the natural impulse to look at things changes into lascivious curiosity. Depending on the extent of the repression, either sexual shyness or lasciviousness develops more strongly. Usually, both exist side by side, so that the old conflict is replaced by a new one. The later outcome is one of two things: either the repression is maintained and neurotic symptoms develop, or the repressed breaks through in the form of a perversion, namely, exhibitionism. Given a sex-negating upbringing, the development of a sexual structure which disturbs neither subjective well-being nor social living is mostly the result of chance and the interplay of a number of factors, such as the liberation from parental and to some extent from social authority in puberty, and, most importantly, the ability to establish a normal sex life. It is easy to see, then, that the repression of the impulse to observe and to display the genitals leads to results which no educator could consider desirable.

Sexual education in the past proceeded from a negative valuation of sexuality and from ethical instead of hygienic arguments. Its results are neuroses and perversions. To object to an education accepting nakedness means to agree with the usual antisexual education. On the other hand, to sanction nakedness and to leave the other aims of sexual education untouched would mean creating a contradiction which would either render any practical attempt illusory or would render the situation even more diffi-



cult for the child. A compromise in the field of sex education is not possible because the sexual impulse follows its own inherent laws. Before tackling the question of sex education at all one must first take an unequivocal stand for or against sex-affirmation or sex-negation, for or against the ruling sexual morality. Without clarity about one's own standpoint in this question any discussion of the sexual problem is fruitless; it is the prerequisite of any agreement in these matters. Where, however, such a clarification of the prerequisites leads to, shall be shown here.

We reject, then, a sex-negating upbringing because of its dangers to health, and decide in favor of a sex-affirming upbringing. Some people will say that this is not so dangerous after all, that they acknowledge the value of sexuality and that it is only a matter of "furthering its sublimation." But that is not the point here. It is not a question of sublimation, but of the concrete question whether the sexes should lose their shyness to expose their genitals and other erotically important parts of their bodies. More concretely: whether educators and pupils, parents and children, when bathing and playing, should appear before each other naked or in bathing costume; whether nakedness should become a matter of course. Everyone who accepts nakedness unconditionally—conditional acceptance has its place only in the conservative nudist clubs where nudism is practised for the training in sexual abstinence—everyone who does not strive for mere islands in the ocean of social morality but for a general reform toward natural sexuality, will have to examine the relationship of nakedness to sexuality in general and will have to see if the consequences of his endeavors—no matter what their present practicability may be—lie in the direction of his intentions.

Medical experience shows that sexual repression results in illness, perversion and lasciviousness. Let us try to formulate the conditions and the results of a sex-affirmative upbringing. If one is not ashamed of appearing naked before a child it will not develop sexual shyness or lasciviousness; on the other hand, it will undoubtedly wish to have its sexual curiosity satisfied.

This wish one can hardly deny; in doing so, one would create a far more difficult conflict much harder for the child to suppress. In addition, there would be a far greater danger of a perversion developing. Of course, one could not object to masturbation, and would have to explain to the child the process of procreation. One might evade the child's request to watch sexual intercourse. But that would already mean a restriction of a sex-affirmative attitude. For what could one say to a cynical sexual moralist who would ask why the child should not watch sexual intercourse and who would point out that, as analytical experience shows, practically every child has listened to it, anyhow? So why should the child not see it? He might ask, further, what could be the objection to it, since the child often enough observes the sexual act between animals anyhow? Such questions might force us to admit that we have no argument against it, except perhaps an ethical one, which would only support the position of our moralist. Or else we would have the courage to admit that if we do not want the child to watch the act, it is not in the child's interest, but in the interest of our own undisturbed pleasure. The only alternative would be either to turn to sexual ethics again—which of necessity is always antisexual—or to face the most touchy of problems, our attitude toward sexual intercourse. In the latter case, we would have to make sure that the District Attorney's office did not hear about it because he would inevitably bring a charge of indecency against us.

The reader who believes that we are exaggerating is asked to follow us a little further in order to convince himself that approval of nakedness and sexual education, factually and rationally carried out, carries with it the danger of jail for educator as well as pupil.<sup>3</sup>

Let us suppose that in our own sexual interest we divert the child's desire to watch sexual intercourse. We soon become entangled in insoluble contradictions and find that all our endeavors

<sup>3</sup> The editor of a Journal who reprinted this section—which first appeared as an article in the *Zeitschr. f. psychoan. Pädagogik* in 1927—was sentenced to 40 days in jail, by a highly liberal Government.

are thrown overboard if we did not give a strictly truthful answer to the child's question as to when it will be able to do the same. It has learned that the child grows within the mother, and also, that for this purpose the parents have to engage in the sexual act. If the parents had been courageous they have told the child that sexual intercourse is pleasurable, just as playing with the genital is pleasurable to the child. But if the child knows this, it cannot be put off for very long. With puberty, there is increased sexual excitation, involuntary emissions, menstruation, etc. If we tried to put the youngster off any longer, our sexual moralist would ask the logical question—though it may sound ironical—what were our objections to sexual intercourse now? He will rightly point out that among the industrial workers and the peasantry, sexual life is taken up as a matter of course at the time of sexual maturity, that is, around the age of 15 or 16. No doubt we shall feel embarrassed at the thought that our sons and daughters might insist on their right to full sexual intercourse at the age of 15 or 16, or possibly earlier. After an embarrassed hesitation, we will look for arguments. We may remember the argument of "cultural sublimation," the argument that abstinence in puberty is necessary for intellectual development. We may recommend these youths—who previously had grown up without sexual restrictions—that, in their own interest, they remain abstinent "for the time being." But our malicious and well-informed moralist will put forward two arguments which cannot be countered. First, he will say, there is no abstinence anyhow: sexologists and analysts contend that nearly 100 per cent of adolescents masturbate, and he cannot see any fundamental difference between masturbation and the sexual act. More than that, not only does masturbation reduce sexual tension less efficiently than does sexual intercourse; it is also connected with much more conflict and, consequently, much more harmful. Second, he will say, if masturbation is so universal, the thesis of the necessity of abstinence for intellectual development cannot be correct. He will have heard it said that not the occurrence of masturbation, but, rather, its absence in childhood and puberty is a pathological

sign; that nothing proves that adolescents living in abstinence grow into more active adults, on the contrary. At this point we may remember that Freud reduced the general intellectual inferiority of women to their greater sexual inhibitions and that he contended that the sexual life is the prototype of social achievement. True, later on he contradicted himself when he asserted that sexual repression was necessary for cultural achievement. He failed to distinguish satisfied and unsatisfied sexuality; the former furthers, the latter impedes cultural achievement. The few bad poems which occasionally are created during abstinence are of no great interest.

Intellectually convinced by this time, we will try to find the motives of our untenable argumentation; in so doing, we find in ourselves all kinds of interesting and not exactly pleasant tendencies, tendencies which do not seem to fit our progressive endeavors. Our argument about intellectual development proves a rationalization of our reluctance to let sexuality take its natural course. This we will wisely keep from our moralist, but we will frankly admit the untenability of our arguments and bring up a more serious one ourselves. Namely, what will happen to the children resulting from these first unions since there is no economic possibility of bringing them up? Our opponent will ask in amazement why we do not want to inform all adolescent school children about contraception. A vision of the laws against immorality will soon bring us back to the solid ground of social reality. All kinds of things will occur to us: That, with our approval of nakedness, with our sexual education—dealing not with the fertilization of flowers, but of humans!—we are pulling one stone after the other from the edifice of conservative morality; that the ideal of virginity until marriage becomes as hollow as that of eternal monogamy, and with that the ideal of conventional marriage in general. For no sensible person will contend that people who have had a sex education which is serious, uncompromising and based on science, will be able to conform to the prevailing compulsive customs and morality.

Our moralist, having brought us to the place where he wanted

us, will ask triumphantly whether we really believe that any of the demands which result from an attempt at honest sexual education can be carried through under existing social conditions. He will ask whether we really consider all this desirable. He will add, with full justification, that he only wanted to prove to us that everything had to remain unchanged, sex-negating education, neuroses, perversions, prostitution and venereal diseases, if the high values of marriage, chastity, the family and conservative society were to be maintained. Thereupon many a fanatic among the sex educators will take to his heels. In doing so, he will act more honestly and consciously, in better awareness of his own position, than he who, in order not to lose the sense of his progressiveness, will say that all this is greatly exaggerated, that sex information could not possibly have all these effects, that, in fact, it is not so important after all. But then one might justly ask, why all the efforts?

If individual parents give their children a consistent rational sex education they will have to know that there are many things which they will have to renounce and which ordinarily parents value most highly in their children, such as attachment to the family far beyond puberty, a sexual life of the children such as is considered "decent" today, submission to the parent's judgment in important life decisions, "good matches" for the daughters according to prevalent concepts, and many more things. The few parents who will bring up their children in this manner have no social influence. They also have to keep in mind that they will expose their children to serious conflicts with the present social and moral order, although they are spared neurotic conflicts. But anyone who, dissatisfied with the present social order, believes himself able to change the present order by any activities on a large scale, say, in schools, will soon come to feel that by withdrawal of his means of existence or by far more severe measures—mental institution or jail—he will be deprived of the possibility to discuss with us the question as to whether his method of changing the social order is the correct one. We need not adduce proof for the fact that the representatives of

society which are materially interested in the maintenance of the present social order tolerate or even further such reform movements as are only insignificant pastimes but immediately become brutal and utilize all the ample means of suppression at their disposal as soon as it is a matter of serious endeavors which threaten to shake their material and the corresponding ideal values.

Sex education raises serious problems of much greater consequence than most sex reformers even dream of. It is for this reason that there is no progress whatsoever in this field, in spite of all the knowledge and means which sexual research has placed in our hands. We are up against a powerful social apparatus which for the time being offers passive resistance but which will proceed to active resistance with the first serious practical endeavor on our part. All hesitation and precaution, all indecision and tendency to compromise in questions of sex education can be traced not only to our own sexual repressions but—in spite of the honesty of educational endeavors—to the fear of getting into serious conflict with the conservative social order.

The following two examples from the sex hygiene clinic will show that medical conscience often forces one to take measures which are in sharp conflict not only with conservative moralism but also with the usual kind of sex reform.

A girl of 16 and a boy of 17, both strong and well developed, come to the sex hygiene clinic, shy and apprehensive. After much encouragement, the boy asks whether it is really so harmful to have sexual intercourse before the age of 20.

"Why do you think it is harmful?"

"That's what our group leader in the Red Falcons says and everybody else who talks about the sexual question."

"Do you talk about these things in your group?"

"Certainly. We all suffer horribly, but nobody dares to talk *openly*. Just recently, a bunch of boys and girls left and formed their own group, because they couldn't get along with the group leader. He is one of those who keeps saying that sexual intercourse is harmful."

"How long have you known each other?"

"Three years."

"Have you had sexual intercourse together?"

"No, but we love each other very much and we must break up because we always get so terribly excited."

"How is that?"

(After a long pause.) "Well, we kiss each other, and so on. Most of them do that. But now we are almost going crazy. The worst thing is that because of our functions we always have to work together. She has had very frequent crying spells recently and I am beginning to fail in school."

"What do you two think would be the best solution?"

"We thought of breaking up, but that wouldn't work. The whole group we lead would disintegrate, and then the same thing would happen with another group."

"Do you do sports?"

"Yes, but it's no good at all. When we are together we only think of one thing. Please tell us whether it's really harmful."

"No, it is not harmful, but it often creates great difficulties with parents and other people."

I explained to them the physiology of puberty and of sexual intercourse, the social obstacles, the danger of pregnancy, and contraception, and told them to think things over and come back. Two weeks later I saw them again, happy, grateful and able to work. They had overcome all inner and outer difficulties. I continued to see them occasionally over a period of two months and became certain that I had been able to save two young people from falling ill. The satisfaction about this outcome was only marred by the realization that such successes of simple counseling are rare exceptions, due to the neurotic fixations of most of the young people who come for advice.

The second example is that of a woman of 35 who looked much younger than her age. Her situation was the following: She had been married for 18 years, had a grown son and lived with her husband in an outwardly happy marriage. For the past three years, the husband had had a relationship with another woman. The wife tolerated this, with a good understanding of the fact that after a marriage of such

long duration there will be a desire for another sexual partner. For some months now, she had been suffering from her sexual abstinence but was too proud to induce her husband to have intercourse with her. To an increasing degree, she suffered from palpitations, insomnia, irritability and depression. She had made the acquaintance of another man, but moral scruples kept her from having intercourse with him, although she herself considered her scruples nonsensical. Her husband kept boasting about her fidelity, and she knew perfectly well that he would not have been willing to grant her that right which he took for himself as a matter of course. She asked what she should do, saying that she could no longer stand the situation.

A case like this needs careful analysis. Continuation of sexual abstinence meant the certainty of neurotic illness. To disturb the husband in his new relationship and to win him back was impossible for two reasons. First, he would not have let himself be disturbed and had openly admitted that he no longer had any sexual desire for her; second, she herself no longer desired him. There remained only a sexual relationship with the man she loved. The difficulty was that she was not economically independent and the husband, on hearing of it, would immediately have started divorce proceedings. I discussed all these possibilities with the woman and told her to think it over. After a few weeks I learned that she had decided to establish a sexual relationship with her friend and to keep it a secret from her husband. Her stasis-neurotic disturbances disappeared soon thereafter. Her decision had been made possible by my successful attempt to dispel her moral scruples. According to law, I had become guilty. What I had done was to make sexual gratification possible for a woman on the verge of neurotic illness.

It was at about this time that one night I found a copy of my pamphlet *SEXUALERREGUNG UND SEXUALBEFRIEDIGUNG* in my letter box, with the following sentences written on the cover: "I warn you! Don't go too far, you spoiler of youth! Stop this business, you dog—beat it to Russia! Or else!"

A threat to life as the response of conservative society to a matter-of-course medical procedure. One can easily understand the cautiousness of customary sex reform.



## CHAPTER V

### THE AUTHORITARIAN FAMILY AS EDUCATIONAL APPARATUS

The foremost breeding place of the ideological atmosphere of conservatism is the authoritarian family. Its prototype is the triangle: father, mother, child. While the family, according to conservative concepts, is the basis, the "nucleus" of human society as such, the study of its changes in the course of historical development and of its social function at any given time reveals it to be the *result* of definite economic constellations. Thus, we do not consider the family the cornerstone and basis of society, but the product of its economic structure (matriarchal and patriarchal family, Zadruga, polygynous and monogynous patriarchy, etc.). If conservative sexology, morality and legislature keep pointing to the family as *the* basis of "state" and "society," they are correct insofar as the *authoritarian* family is indeed part and parcel, and at the same time, prerequisite, of the *authoritarian* state and of *authoritarian* society. Its social significance lies in its following characteristics:

1. *Economically*: In the early days of capitalism, the family was the economic unit of enterprise and still is among the farmers and small tradesmen.

2. *Socially*: In authoritarian society, the family has the important task of protecting the woman and the children who are deprived of economic and sexual rights.

3. *Politically*: In the pre-capitalistic phase of home-industry and in early industrial capitalism the family had immediate roots in the familial economy (as is still the case in the economic set-up of small farms). With the development of the means of production and the collectivization of the work process, however, there

occurred a *change in the function of the family*. Its immediate economic basis became less significant to the extent to which the woman was included in the productive process; its place was taken by the *political function* which the family now began to assume. Its cardinal function, that for which it is mostly supported and defended by conservative science and law, is that of serving as a *factory for authoritarian ideologies* and conservative structures. It forms the educational apparatus through which practically every individual of our society, from the moment of drawing his first breath, has to pass. It influences the child in the sense of a reactionary ideology not only as an authoritarian institution, but also on the strength of its own structure; it is the conveyor belt between the economic structure of conservative society and its ideological superstructure; its reactionary atmosphere must needs become inextricably implanted in every one of its members. Through its own form and through direct influencing, it conveys not only conservative ideologies and conservative attitudes toward the existing social order; in addition, on the basis of the sexual structure to which it owes its existence and which it procreates, it exerts an immediate influence on the sexual structure of the children in the conservative sense. It is not by accident that the attitude of adolescents toward the existing social order, pro or contra, corresponds to their attitude, pro or contra, toward the family. Similarly, it is not by accident that conservative and reactionary youths, as a rule, are strongly attached to their families while revolutionary youths have a negative attitude toward the family and detach themselves from it.

This has to do with the sex-negative atmosphere and structure of the family and with the relationships among the members of the family.

Thus, in studying the educational significance of the family, we have to investigate two separate facts: first, the influence of the concrete social ideologies which influence youth with the help of the family, and second, the immediate influence of the "triangle structure" itself.

## 1. THE INFLUENCE OF SOCIAL IDEOLOGY

Whatever differences there may be between the families of different classes, they have one important thing in common: they are all exposed to the same sex-moralistic atmosphere. Whatever individual class morality this or that class may have does not counteract this atmosphere; it exists beside it and compromises with it.

The predominating type of the family, the lower middle class family, extends far beyond the social class of the "lower middle classes," into the upper classes and even farther into the class of the industrial workers.

The basis of the middle class family is the relationship of the patriarchal father to wife and children. He is, as it were, the exponent and representative of the authority of the state in the family. Because of the contradiction between his position in the production process (subordinate) and his family function (boss) he is a top-sergeant type; he kotows to those above, absorbs the prevailing attitudes (hence his tendency to imitation) and dominates those below; he transmits the governmental and social concepts and enforces them.

As far as *sexual ideology* is concerned, the social ideology of marriage of the lower middle class family is identical with the basic idea of the family in general, lifelong monogamous marriage. As miserable and hopeless, painful and intolerable as the marital situation and family constellation may be, the members of the family must defend it, in the family and outside. The social necessity of doing so makes it necessary to hush up the actual misery and to idealize family and marriage; it also produces the widespread family sentimentality and the slogans of "family happiness," "the home as the castle," "the quiet harbor" and the haven of happiness which the family allegedly represents to the children. The fact that in our own society things are even more hopeless outside of marriage and family, because there sexuality lacks any kind of help, material, legal or ideological,

is misinterpreted in the sense that the family is a *natural, biological* institution. The self-deception about the true state of affairs and the sentimental slogans which are important elements in the ideological atmosphere are a psychic necessity; they help tolerate the psychically intolerable family situation. This is why the treatment of neuroses is apt to destroy familial and marital bonds, because it does away with illusions and bares the actual truth.

*The goal of education, from the very beginning, is education for marriage and family.* Education for a profession comes much later. A sex-negating and sex-denying education is not only dictated by the social atmosphere; it is also necessitated by the sexual repression on the part of the adults. Without a far-reaching degree of sexual resignation, existence in the atmosphere of the compulsive family is impossible.

In the typical conservative family, the influencing of sexuality takes on a specific form which lays the basis for a "marriage and family" mentality. That is, by an overemphasis on the functions of eating and excretion, the child is arrested in the stages of pregenital eroticism, while genital activity is strictly inhibited (prohibition of masturbation). Pregenital fixation and genital inhibition cause a displacement of the sexual interest in the direction of sadism. The sexual curiosity of the child is actively suppressed. This creates a contradiction with the existing living arrangements, the sexual behavior of the parents in front of the children and the inevitable sexual milieu in the family. Needless to say, the children observe everything although they get distorted impressions and ideas of what goes on.

The ideological and educational inhibition of sexuality, with the simultaneous witnessing of the most intimate acts among the adults, already lay in the child the basis for sexual hypocrisy. This is somewhat less the case in industrial workers' families where there is less emphasis on the functions of eating and digesting while the genital activity is more important and less taboo. For the children of such families, the conflicts are fewer, the way to genitality blocked less. All this is entirely due to the

economic conditions of the industrial worker's family. If a worker is economically successful and ascends a few steps into the workers' aristocracy, his children are exposed more strongly to the pressure of conservative morality. While in the conservative family sexual suppression is more or less complete, it is mitigated in the industrial workers' milieu by the fact that the children are much less supervised.

## 2. THE TRIANGLE STRUCTURE

On the one hand, the family influences the child in the sense of social ideology. On the other hand, the very constellation of the family, its triangle structure, has in itself an influence on the child which again lies entirely in the direction of the conservative tendencies of society.

Freud's discovery that wherever this triangle structure exists the child develops definite sexual attachments, of a tender and sensual nature, to its parents, is basic for an understanding of individual sexual development. The so-called "Oedipus complex" comprises all those relationships which are determined, in their intensity as well as in their final outcome, by the family and the larger environment. The child directs its first genital love impulses toward the persons in its immediate environment, which means, in most cases, the parents. Typically, the parent of the other sex is loved and the one of the same sex hated. These feelings of hatred and jealousy are soon complicated by guilt feelings and fear. The fear is primarily connected with the genital feelings toward the other parent. This fear continues with the actual impossibility of satisfying the incestual desire and brings about the repression of the desire. This repression is the basis of almost all of the sexual disturbances in later life.

Two facts which are basic for the outcome of this infantile experience should not be overlooked. First, there would be no repression if the boy, although forced to renounce his genital desire for his mother, were at the same time allowed to masturbate and to play genitally with girls of his own age. People do not like to admit the fact that such sexual playing ("playing

doctor," "playing house") always takes place when children are together for any length of time; because these games are condemned by the environment, they always take place on the sly, with guilt feelings and consequent harmful fixations to these games. The child who does not dare engage in such games when opportunity presents itself fits into the scheme of family education but is certain to develop a serious impairment of its later sex life. It is impossible much longer to deny these facts and to escape the consequences that follow from them. True, they cannot be mastered within the framework of authoritarian society and as long as family education is guided by economic and political principles.

The repression of the early sexual drives is determined, qualitatively and quantitatively, by the way parents think and feel about sexuality. Much depends on whether the parents are more or less strict, whether the negative attitude of the parents extends to masturbation, etc.

The fact that the child experiences his genitality, at the critical age between 4 and 6, in the parental home, forces on him that solution which is typical of family education. If a child were brought up from its third year together with other children and without the influence of the parent fixation, it would develop an entirely different sexuality. The fact should not be overlooked that family education counteracts a collective education even if a child spends several hours a day in a kindergarten. In a practical way, the family ideology has much more influence on the kindergarten than the kindergarten on family education.

The child cannot escape a sexual and authoritarian fixation to the parents. It is oppressed by parental authority on the basis of its physical smallness alone, whether this authority is strict or not. Soon, the authoritarian fixation drowns out the sexual one and forces it into an unconscious existence; later, at a time when the sexual interests try to turn to the extrafamilial world, this authoritarian fixation stands as a powerful inhibition between the sexual interest and reality. Just because this authoritarian fixation becomes largely unconscious, it is no longer accessible to con-

scious influencing. It means little that this unconscious fixation to parental authority often expresses itself as its opposite, as neurotic rebellion. This cannot release the sexual interests except perhaps in the form of impulsive sexual actions, of a pathological compromise between sexuality and guilt feeling. The dissolution of this fixation is the *basic prerequisite of a healthy sex life*. As things are today, only a small minority of people succeed in this.

Parental fixation—both sexual fixation and submission to paternal authority—makes the step into sexual and social reality at puberty difficult if not impossible. The conservative ideal of the good boy and good girl who remain hopelessly stuck in the infantile situation far into their adult lives, is the extreme opposite of a free, independent youth.

A further characteristic of family education is that parents, especially the mother, unless she is forced to work outside the home, see in their children the only content of their lives, to the great disadvantage of the children. Facts such as that the children then play the role of household pets whom one can love but also torture according to one's whims, that the emotional attitude of the parents makes them altogether unsuited for the task of education, are platitudes which need no further mention.

Marital misery, to the extent to which it does not exhaust itself in the marital conflicts, is poured out over the children. This creates new damage to their independence and their sexual structure. But, in addition, it creates still another conflict: that between their aversion to marriage because of what they have witnessed, and the later economic compulsion to marry. In puberty, tragedies are most likely to occur when the adolescents have just escaped from the damage wrought by infantile sex education and now try to shed the family fetters also.

The sexual suppression which the adults had to impose on themselves in order to be able to tolerate the marital and familial existence is thus extended to the children. And since they must, for economic reasons, later sink back into the familial situation, the sexual suppression is perpetuated from generation to generation.

Since the compulsive family, economically and ideologically, is part and parcel of authoritarian society, it would be utterly naive to expect that its effects could possibly be eradicated within this society. In addition, these effects are in the family itself and are, by way of unconscious mechanisms, inextricably anchored in each individual.

In addition to the direct sexual inhibition resulting from the attachment to the parents, we have the guilt feelings due to the enormous hatred which accumulates during all the years of living in the familial situation.

If this hatred remains *conscious*, it may become a powerful individual revolutionary force; it will cause the individual to break family ties and may become the motor power for actions against the conditions which created the hatred.

If, on the other hand, the hatred is *repressed*, it develops into the opposite traits of blind loyalty and infantile obedience. Such traits are bound to become severe handicaps if such a person, for some reason, joins a liberal movement. Such a person may be in favor of complete freedom but may send his children to Sunday school and may himself not give up membership in the church because "he couldn't do such a thing to his dear old parents." He will show all the signs of indecision and lack of independence, due to his fixation to the family. He will not be a fighter for freedom.

The identical family situation, of course, may also produce the "revolutionary for neurotic reasons." He is often found among middle-class intellectuals. The guilt feelings attached to his revolutionary feelings make him a doubtful asset to a revolutionary movement.

Familial sex education is bound to damage the individual's sexuality. If one or the other succeeds, in spite of everything, in fighting through to a healthy sex life, it usually takes place at the expense of the family ties.

The repression of the sexual needs creates a general weakening of intellectual and emotional functioning; in particular, it makes people lack independence, will-power and critical faculties.



Authoritarian society is not concerned about "morality *per se*." Rather, the anchoring of sexual morality and the changes it brings about in the organism create that specific psychic structure which forms the mass-psychological basis of any authoritarian social order.<sup>1</sup> The vassal-structure is a mixture of sexual impotence, helplessness, longing for a Führer, fear of authority, fear of life, and mysticism. It is characterized by devout loyalty and simultaneous rebellion. Fear of sexuality and sexual hypocrisy characterize the "Babbitt" and his milieu. People with such a structure are incapable of democratic living. Their structure nullifies all attempts at establishing or maintaining organizations run along truly democratic principles. They form the mass-psychological soil on which the dictatorial or bureaucratic tendencies of their democratically elected leaders can develop.

The political function of the family, then, is twofold:

1. It reproduces itself by crippling people sexually. By perpetuating itself, the patriarchal family also perpetuates sexual repression with all its results: sexual disturbances, neuroses, psychoses, perversions and sex crimes.

2. It creates the individual who is forever afraid of life and of authority and thus creates again and again the possibility that masses of people can be governed by a handful of powerful individuals.

Thus the family gains for the conservative individual its peculiar significance as a fortress of that social order in which he believes. It is for this reason that the family is one of the most keenly defended institutions in conservative sexology. For it does "guarantee the maintenance of the state and of society"—in the conservative, reactionary sense. The evaluation of the family thus becomes the keystone for the evaluation of the general nature of different kinds of social order.

---

<sup>1</sup> Cf. DER EINBRUCH DER SEXUALMORAL, where this is historically proved.

## CHAPTER VI

### THE PROBLEM OF PUBERTY<sup>1</sup>

In no other field has conservative ideology been able to influence sexology as deeply as in the sexual problem of adolescence. The essence of all treatises on the subject is the jump from the finding that puberty is essentially the reaching of *sexual maturity* to the demand that adolescents should live in *sexual abstinence*. Whatever the terms in which this demand is couched, in whatever way it may be rationalized, by alleged biological arguments as that of "not yet achieved maturity" before the age of 24 (Gruber), or by recourse to ethical, cultural or "hygienic" reasons, none of the authors known to me has hit upon the idea *that the sexual misery of youth is basically a social problem, that it would not exist but for the demand for sexual abstinence made by conservative society*. In trying to justify this social demand biologically, culturally or ethically, its proponents get into the most absurd contradictions.

#### 1. THE CONFLICT OF PUBERTY

All the phenomena of the conflict of puberty and the neurosis of puberty derive from one fact. This is the conflict between the fact that an adolescent, at about the age of 15, reaches sexual maturity, i.e., experiences the physiological necessity of sexual intercourse and the capacity to procreate or bear children, and the other fact of being economically and structurally incapable of creating the legal framework demanded by society for sexual intercourse, i.e., marriage. This is the basic difficulty. There are others in addition, such as the sex-negative upbringing of the child which in turn is part of the whole system of conservative

---

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Reich, *DER SEXUELLE KAMPF DER JUGEND*.

sexual order. In primitive matriarchal societies, sexual misery of youth is unknown. On the contrary, all reports are to the effect that puberty rites introduce adolescents to a full sex life immediately on reaching maturity; that in many of these societies there is much emphasis on sexual happiness; that puberty rites are a great social event; that many societies not only do not hinder the sex life of adolescents, but further it in every way possible, e.g., by providing special houses to which adolescents move after having reached sexual maturity.<sup>2</sup> Even in those primitive societies where the institution of strict monogamous marriage is already established, the youth, from puberty until marriage, have, nevertheless, complete freedom of sexual intercourse. None of the reports points to the occurrence of sexual misery among adolescents or suicides among them because of frustrated love. In these societies, the conflict between sexual maturity and lack of genital gratification does not exist. This is the basic difference between primitive and authoritarian society. In the latter, it is true, puberty rites still exist, in the form of various ecclesiastical rites (confirmation, etc.), but not only with complete camouflaging of their true nature, but, on the contrary, for the purpose of exercising the exact opposite influence on youth.

The most clearly defined expression of adolescent misery is *masturbation*. Except for pathological cases, it is nothing but the substitute for lacking sexual intercourse. As simple as this fact is, I have as yet not found it stated in any sociological treatise. Perhaps I have overlooked one. The point is that this simple fact is kept so carefully hidden that it is possible to overlook it. In the sexological treatises, the puberty conflict is defined not as *maturity—no sexual intercourse*, but as *maturity—no possibility of marriage*. Masturbation continues to be condemned by the church and by moralistically prejudiced and sexologically ignorant physicians. True, in recent years it has frequently been stated that the

<sup>2</sup> "Such peoples quietly let their children satisfy their hardly awakened instincts with a freedom which we ourselves would call impudent indecency (*freche Unzucht*), while the adults regard it as 'play' . . . Among many primitive societies, boys and girls meet each other with the most naive affection." (Ploss-Bartels, *DAS WEIB*, 1902.)

fight against masturbation only increases the misery by intensifying the pathogenic guilt feelings. Yet, such knowledge—with the exception of some popular writings by authors like Max Hodann—remained buried in scientific treatises. The masses of adolescents have never heard about it.

Psychoanalytic investigation of the unconscious aspects of the puberty conflict showed, in brief, a reactivation of early infantile incestuous desires and sexual guilt feelings; these guilt feelings are attached to the unconscious phantasies and not the masturbatory act itself. Orgasm research has provided a correction of psychoanalytic findings: it is not the incest phantasies which cause masturbation, but the sexual excitation due to the increased activity of the genital apparatus. The sexual stasis causes the old incest phantasy to be revived; the phantasy does not cause the masturbatory activity, though it determines the form and content of the psychic experience accompanying the masturbatory act. This, and only this, explains the fact that it is exactly at the time of sexual maturity that the incest phantasies reappear, and not earlier or later.

The puberty conflict, then, represents a regression to more primitive, infantile forms and contents of sexuality. To the extent to which this regression is not the result of a pathological infantile fixation, *it is the result exclusively of the social negation of genital gratification in the sexual act at the time of sexual maturity.* There are two possibilities: Either the adolescent enters puberty incapable of finding a sexual partner, as a result of his early sexual development; or the social frustration of sexual gratification forces him into masturbation phantasies and with that into the pathogenic situation of infantile conflict. Needless to say, these two situations are not basically different, for the former also is nothing but the result of a sex-suppressive infantile situation. The only difference is that in the first case the social barrier to sexuality has made itself felt fully in childhood, in the latter case not until puberty. It would be more correct to say that the two inhibitions of sexual development, the infantile one and that at puberty, meet and reinforce each other in that the

infantile inhibition creates the fixation to which the later social inhibition in puberty makes the individual regress. The more severe the infantile damage to sexuality, the less chance has the adolescent to take up a normal sex life, that is, the more effective is the social barrier to adolescent sexual intercourse.

The guilt feeling with masturbation is so much more intense than with sexual intercourse because it is heavily burdened with incest phantasies, while gratifying sexual intercourse makes incest phantasies superfluous. If there is a strong fixation to infantile objects, the sexual act is disturbed also, and the guilt feelings are no less intense than with masturbation. One sees again and again how satisfying sexual intercourse relieves the sexual guilt feelings. Since, other things being equal, masturbation never provides the same gratification as sexual intercourse, it is always accompanied by more guilt feeling than the sexual act. There are all kinds of transitions between the extreme type of adolescent who is completely incapable of taking the step from his infantile parental fixation to a real sex life and the other type who manages this step without difficulty.

The first type represents the ideal of the "good" youngster, who is attached to his family, who gives in to all the demands made by his parents as the representatives of conservative society; he is the good pupil according to reactionary standards, modest, without ambition, submissive. This type later on forms the élite of the resigned marital partners and uncritical political followers. He is also the type who provides the main quota of neurotics.

The second type, which is apt to be classed as antisocial, is basically rebellious, ambitious, averse to the parental home and the demands of its narrow milieu, provides among the workers the revolutionary element. In many strata of the middle classes this type is represented by psychopaths and impulsive characters who are apt to deteriorate socially unless they establish contact with a social movement, because otherwise they get into conflicts which are insoluble within their own milieu. Since they are of more than average intelligence and capable of intense feelings, their teachers, who are geared to the "good" ones and those of

below average intelligence, do not know what to do with them. They are apt to be called "morally insane" (the yardstick being reactionary "morals") even if they commit nothing worse than fulfilling the natural function of their sexuality. But since this, under the conditions of sexual living in our society, of necessity fringes on the criminal, such adolescents are, for purely social reasons, much exposed to "delinquency." We agree here fully with Lindsey<sup>3</sup> who states:

In general I find that there are several types of youth who are unlikely to get into trouble. First, there is the type that lacks energy, self confidence, and initiative. One characteristic of most of the boys and girls who get into difficulties is that they have just those qualities, and are all the more worth saving on that account. It is not always true that the boy or girl who never is willful or troublesome lacks energy and character, but it is quite likely to be so. Consistently high marks in deportment in school, especially for a boy, may merely mean that he lacks courage and energy, and perhaps health, and is restrained, not by morality but by *fear*, for "morality" doesn't play much part in the reactions of the normal lad—not if he is the healthy young animal he should be. He ought to be about as unconscious of his soul as he is of his breathing, or any other vital thing about him. ("REVOLT," p. 94.).

## 2. SOCIAL DEMAND AND SEXUAL REALITY

Three questions regarding adolescent sexuality require clarification:

1. What demands does authoritarian society make on the adolescent, and what are the reasons for these demands?
2. What does adolescent sex life between the ages of 14 and 18 really look like?
3. What are the ascertained facts regarding the consequences of a) masturbation, b) abstinence, and c) sexual intercourse in adolescents?

In formulating "ethical norms" for sexual living, reactionary

<sup>3</sup> THE REVOLT OF MODERN YOUTH. By Judge Ben B. Lindsey and Wainwright Evans. New York: Boni & Liveright, 1925. Hereafter referred to as "REVOLT."

society demands of the adolescent absolute chastity before marriage. It condemns sexual intercourse and masturbation alike. (We are speaking here not of individual writers but of the general ideological atmosphere). Science, to the extent to which it is—though completely unconsciously—influenced by reactionary ideology, formulates theses which are to give this ideology a solid and scientific basis. Very frequently it does not even do that, but simply keeps pointing to the famous “moral nature” of man. In doing so, it forgets about the very point of view of which it keeps reminding its ideological opponents, namely, that the legitimate task of science is only that of describing facts, without evaluation, and of explaining these facts as to their causality. Where it goes beyond the attempts to justify the social demands by moralistic arguments, it employs a method which is objectively much more dangerous, namely, the method of camouflaging moralistic viewpoints by pseudoscientific theses. Morality is being “scientifically” rationalized.

Thus, for example, the statement is made that the *abstinence of adolescents is necessary in the interest of social and cultural achievement*. This statement is based on Freud's theory that the social and cultural achievements of man derive their energy from sexual energies which were diverted from their original goal to a “higher” goal. This theory is known as that of “sublimation.” It has been badly misinterpreted in that sexual gratification and sublimation were made into a rigid and absolute antithesis. The question is, concretely: *what kind* of sexual activity and gratification, and sublimation of *what* sexual drives?

It does not take more than casual observation to realize the fallacy of the argument that abstinence is necessary for social development. It is argued that sexual intercourse of youth would decrease their achievements. The fact is—and all modern sexologists agree in this—that all adolescents masturbate. That alone disposes of this argument. For, could we assume that sexual intercourse would interfere with social achievement while masturbation does not? What is the *basic* difference between masturbation and sexual intercourse? Is not, finally, conflict-laden masturba-

tion infinitely more harmful than an orderly sex life? A hopeless confusion of argumentation! Unless one distinguishes satisfactory and unsatisfactory sex life, one is incapable of seeing its various connections with social achievement and sublimation. Why does such a gap exist here in the theory of sexuality? The reason is obvious. It exists because filling this gap would lead to the loosening of one after the other of the rivets which hold together the complicated and clever structure of reactionary ideology.

If the most important argument for adolescent chastity were officially invalidated, youth might get ideas into their heads and might proceed to activities which, though in no way dangerous to their health and their sociality, might constitute a danger to the continued existence of the authoritarian family and its institution of compulsive marriage. We shall demonstrate the connection between the demand for adolescent chastity and marital morality elsewhere on the basis of factual material.

*Now, what does adolescent sex life look like in reality? Certainly not as morality demands it to be. Unfortunately, there are no exact statistics available. However, questionnaires, the experiences in sex hygiene clinics, the questions asked by adolescents in meetings on sexual hygiene, and general sex-economic investigations leave no doubt about the correctness of certain general observations. Complete abstinence, i.e., no sexual activity of any kind, hardly ever occurs in adolescent boys; if it does occur, it is in cases of severe neurotic inhibition. In girls abstinence may be somewhat more frequent, but the findings in this respect are all too unreliable. There is no doubt, however, about this: sexual behavior which could be justifiably called abstinence is so extremely rare that in a practical way it does not count at all.*

In reality, all kinds of sexual practices are indulged in which may give the appearance of abstinence. One sees men as well as women who have been masturbating for years without knowing it. In women, masked masturbation frequently takes place by pressing the thighs together; riding bicycles or motorcycles is a frequent occasion of unconscious masturbation. Sexual daydreams, even without corresponding masturbatory activity, are



full masturbation psychically, at least with regard to its harmfulness. Sexual daydreamers who do not masturbate will assert that they live in abstinence. In a certain sense they are right: they are abstinent with regard to *gratification*, but not with regard to *stimulation*.

*a) Workers' youth.*

Without exception, there is a great hesitation among the youngsters to talk with their leaders about sexual matters. It is significant that even among themselves they do not dare to discuss them in a serious manner. On the other hand, sex is constantly talked about in the form of dirty jokes and smutty language; the whole adolescent atmosphere reeks with sexuality. A great many general "cuss" words are used to express things sexual.

Evenings arranged for talks on sex information in workers' organizations serve only too often the purpose of confirming the youngsters in their abstinence. Rarely does one see people with a clear-cut sexual policy who present to the youngsters their central problem correctly. In broaching the problem of sexuality, all depends on how it is done. First, one must not betray even the slightest trace of embarrassment or sex-negative attitude; second, one must talk in an absolutely straightforward manner; and third, experience shows that the burning interest really does not come out into the open until one lets the audience ask their questions in writing. Under those conditions, there are hardly any youngsters who do not ask questions after a talk.

In spite of this attitude among adolescents, sexual intercourse is common, among agricultural youth as early as 13, among the workers' youth at about 15.

Among agricultural youth there is the common custom of the girl waiting in front of a dancing place until a boy takes her in to dance. After the dance, during which sensual behavior is quite open, he takes her out behind a hedge where they have intercourse. Contraception is as good as unknown; the common practice is withdrawal, and abortion (by a quack, of course) is of frequent occurrence.

The urban workers' youth is generally informed about contraceptives, but make remarkably little use of this knowledge. The youth organizations and parties in pre-fascist Germany and Austria paid no attention to the problem of contraception; the majority of the higher party officials even had a negative attitude toward it.

Many youths and youth leaders, therefore, tried to take matters into their own hands and organized meetings and talks on the problem. Soon they met the greatest obstacle: the parents. It was a typical occurrence that even parents who belonged to political organizations prohibited their grown children from going to meetings of their organization when they heard that "such things" were going to be discussed. The same thing was true when they sensed the beginning of purely friendly relationships, even in the case of 18-year-olds. Experience shows, however, that the strictest parents cannot maintain their attitude in the presence of a united mass of adolescents.

Quite commonly, organizations became disrupted by jealousy which often resulted in physical violence. Among the youthful functionaries there were two types. The one lived in sexual abstinence; the other had a full sexual relationship. As far as the first type was concerned, everybody was aware of the fact that the party work served as a substitute for sexual activity. In a typical manner, their party activities began to slacken as soon as they found a sexual partner. Many adolescents, as a matter of fact, joined the organization only with the view of finding a sexual partner and left after having found one.

Very frequently, a boy and a girl "go with each other" for a long period of time, without, however, having sexual intercourse, because, as they say, "there is no opportunity." However, part of the reason lies elsewhere, in inner inhibitions, such as fear of impotence. In the girls, the fear of sexual intercourse is typical. The boys more often urge intercourse; the girls, however, allow all kinds of sexual play but refuse intercourse. Correspondingly, hysterical fits and crying attacks are everyday occurrences.

Nervous disorders are a central problem of youth, more seriously among the girls. Among athletic youths, sexual repression

is more marked than among the non-athletic, and athletics are quite commonly engaged in for the conscious purpose of mastering the sexual impulses.

In summer camps and student colonies also, one finds the two typical phenomena: on the one hand far-reaching sexual freedom, on the other hand severe conflicts which often lead to explosions disrupting the whole community life.

Girls often confess that when at home they have the most intense longing for their boy friend or a boy friend but that unfortunately, when it comes to the point of actually entering a relationship they find themselves refusing it. They are unable to make the transition from phantasy life to actual sexual activity.

The boys masturbate habitually, alone or mutually, an activity which occasionally goes as far as collective excesses. Masturbation is more common among boys than girls.

Dancing and other parties increase the sexual tension, without, however, resulting in corresponding discharge of tension.

Those adolescents who have mastered their internal problems sufficiently to consider taking up sexual intercourse complain about the disastrous lack of room facilities. During the warm seasons, they have intercourse out of doors, while in winter they suffer tremendously from the external impossibility of being together. They lack the money to go to hotels; it hardly ever happens that a youngster has a room of his own; and the parents object strenuously to their being together at home. This leads to serious conflicts and to unhygienic modes of sexual intercourse (in corridors, dark corners, etc.)

The main difficulty lies in the fact that the whole atmosphere of the workers' youth is pervaded by sexual tension while the majority of adolescents are both too much inhibited emotionally and hemmed in by external difficulties to find a way out. Parents, party leadership and the whole social ideology are against them, while at the same time their more or less collective living tends to force them in the direction of breaking through the established sex barriers.

A typical illustration is a workers' youth group in Berlin with which I had the closest contact. They were about 60 in number, between the ages of 14 and 18, predominantly boys. Here also, sexuality was a favorite theme, but mostly in the form of jokes, mainly about sexual intercourse, less about masturbation. They would tease a boy when he was observed "going with" a girl. Most of them had sexual intercourse, and partners were changed rather frequently. Sexual intercourse was not taken very seriously, and there were no serious conflicts with the exception of a few dramatic cases of jealousy which led to physical violence. There were never any excesses or public "orgies." Sexual intercourse usually took place during night parties, but frequently also on day parties out of doors; nobody paid much attention when a boy and a girl occasionally would "disappear." Little was heard of masturbation or homosexual activities. But the boys—not so much the girls—liked to talk to each other about their experiences. When I asked a young girl who had worked as a functionary in the group, why sexuality was not being taken seriously and always talked about jocularly, she said: "How could it be otherwise? Education says it's all bad, but, after all, one has to talk about it and so it comes out in jokes."

The pessary was little known and used. The most common practice was withdrawal or the condom. Quite generally, the condom was considered an expensive luxury (a condom cost about 30 to 50 pfennig).

The work for the party was often disturbed by sexual conflicts. Boys or girls would be accused of having joined the party simply because of their respective partner. Girls, in particular, often stayed only because their boy friends belonged. A girl functionary said that that was only because the adolescents did not know their own minds with regard to their sexuality; to repress sexuality, she said, would be even worse, but she thought that all this would not be so important if education were different and one could talk openly and seriously about these problems. In winter, she said, the lack of

rooms where they could have intercourse was in itself a serious problem; all adolescents suffered from it severely.

I know only the Austrian and German workers' youth well. On the basis of many years' experience I can assert that, with small differences, conditions are equally hopeless everywhere, disastrous to health and the development of social responsibility. In 1934, the National Socialist Government prohibited the communal hiking and staying overnight of male and female youth. Nobody dared to take this up in the interest of youth.

I have no doubt that sexual living conditions are dreadful in all conservative countries; this belief was reinforced by reports I had from England, Hungary, America and other countries.

The most abject misery youth has to suffer comes from the malicious gossiping of old spinsters and sexually unsatisfied men and women in small towns and the country. This makes it completely impossible for youth to establish a love relationship, even if they were psychically capable of doing so. The boredom of the people creates an enormous lascivious curiosity and a maliciousness which leads to many suicides. The picture of such youth is desperate. When I lived in exile in Malmö, I had enough leisure to get more than a glimpse of it. Every evening between 8 and 11, the youth of the town walked up and down Main Street. Boys and girls kept separate; usually 3 or 4 girls walked together, and 3 or 4 boys together. The boys made jokes and looked fresh and embarrassed at the same time; the girls giggled at each other. Occasionally there would be some petting somewhere in a corridor. Culture? Breeding grounds for fascist mentality, when boredom and sexual rottenness are met by National Socialist fanfare. But there are no organizations which would attempt to improve this situation.

### *b) Upper middle class youth.*

Now let us turn to Lindsey's report on the sex life of upper middle class youth in America. The breakthrough of genital sex life in the schools was such as to force the authorities to take steps. Lindsey writes:

Likewise, at Phillips Academy, another boys' school of the first rank, it was found necessary a few years back to forbid dancing at the school because of the license that went with it. This incident likewise received wide newspaper publicity. Alfred E. Stearns, Principal of Phillips Academy, said in an article in the *Boston Globe* that measures which had previously been taken had included the appointment of student and faculty committees charged with the following duties:

"1. To serve as police and to remonstrate with, if not actually eject from the floor, couples who dance in an indecent manner.

2. To prevent the admission of girls of questionable character.

3. To prevent drinking, by boys and girls alike, on the floor and elsewhere.

4. To eject those found to be under the influence of liquor and to prevent the admission of those in like condition.

5. To supervise the girls' dressing room for the purpose of preventing extravagant dress and indecent exposure, drinking, and loose talk.

6. To insist that visiting girls should be accompanied by chaperones; to prevent auto 'joy rides' during the dancing.

7. To prevent the parking of automobiles in close proximity to the dance hall.

8. To prevent other and outside gatherings exempt from the control and supervision of the main dance.

9. To see that girls are promptly and properly returned to their rooms at the close of the dance."

I give this list at length because it leaves no doubt of the sort of conditions that existed in a school second to none in this country for the quality of its students. They are for the most part boys drawn from eastern homes of considerable wealth and culture. They have behind them first-rate traditions and training.

(*"REVOLT,"* p. 52)

Instead of being surprised and morally indignant about the fact that such conditions are found in adolescents from "eastern homes of considerable wealth and culture," we should realize that such conditions do exist in spite of all external puritanism and antisexual education; only their forms appear as the opposite of antisexual morality. What interests us here is not the fact that the suppressed sexuality breaks through in spite of the moral

demands; that goes without saying. What interests us is the *influence of sexual morality on the forms of the sexual activities*. It will be readily seen that these forms correspond neither to sexual morality nor to sexual economy; rather, they are a *compromise* between the two, at the expense of both. Lindsey writes:

The first item in the testimony of these high-school students is that of all the youth who go to parties, attend dances, and ride together in automobiles, more than 90 per cent indulge in hugging and kissing. This does not mean that every girl lets *any* boy hug and kiss her, but that she is hugged and kissed. And evidently this 90 per cent estimate does not apply to those of our young people who lack the biological energy and the social urge which leads the most worthwhile portion of our youth to express their natural instincts in these social diversions. Another way of putting it would be to say that what leads these youngsters into trouble is an overflowing of high spirits and abounding energy which only needs more wise direction.

The testimony I receive regarding this estimated 90 per cent is practically unanimous. If it be true, it means that these young people have more or less definitely come to the conclusion that this minor form of sex experience may be legitimately indulged in. Also that a very large number do indulge in it, without permitting the diversion to exceed certain rather clearly defined limits.

Some girls insist on this kind of thing from boys they go with, and are as aggressive, in a subtle way, in their search for such thrills as are the boys themselves.

I recall one very beautiful and spirited girl who told me that she had refused to go out with a certain boy because he lacked pep, and didn't know how, as she put it, to "love me up."

"Do all the boys do such things nowadays?" I asked.

"Of course they do," she retorted. "If they don't there is something wrong with them."

("REVOLT," p. 56f.)

If Lindsey speaks of "overflowing of high spirits and abounding energy" he is right only insofar as the "abundance of energy" corresponds in part to the more lively sexuality of adolescents and in part is the result of the contradictory character of their

sexual activity. We hear that the adolescents consider hugging and kissing, i.e., the preliminary sexual activities, as something that may be "legitimately" indulged in; also, that, on the other hand, they do not "exceed certain rather clearly defined limits." We can express ourselves less cautiously. What this means is that the adolescents practice all kinds of sexual stimulation, while most of them do not proceed to the sexual act. Why, we must ask, do they allow themselves everything up to but not the sexual act itself? The answer is simple: official morality explicitly designates sexual intercourse as the worst sexual activity. By engaging in petting, the adolescents show their emancipation; by refusing sexual intercourse, they show their obedience to conservative morality. Here, marriageability on the part of the girl is also a consideration, because virginity still draws a premium on the marriage market. Nevertheless, as Lindsey writes,

at least 50 per cent of those who begin with hugging and kissing do not restrict themselves to that, but go further, and indulge in other sex liberties which, by all the conventions, are outrageously improper.

("REVOLT," p. 59)

Only 15 per cent succeed in establishing sexual intercourse. During 1920 and 1921, Lindsey had to deal with 769 girls between the ages of 14 and 17 because of sex delinquency. That the number was not much larger was only due to the limitations of his small staff. According to Lindsey, 90 per cent of the boys have "sexual experiences" before they leave school, i.e., before the age of 18. The girls have given up much of their reserve.

One high-school boy with whom I recently talked admitted that he had had relations with fifteen girls of high-school age, about half of them still in school. He had chosen them in preference to "chippies," or common street girls. I verified this confession, talked with practically all of these girls, and found that they were good, average girls. His experience with each of them had been on only one or two occasions. The girls, with one or two exceptions, were not given to promiscuity, and I believe most of them have turned out well.



A Red Light District in Denver might have saved those girls from these experiences, but it would not have saved the boy—nor the prostitutes, who have as good a right to be saved as anybody else.

There can be no doubt, I think, that since the Red Light Districts were abolished far more “good” girls than formerly have had sex experiences. But, curious as it may seem, fewer girls have been “ruined” and “lost.”

(“REVOLT,” p. 70)

Here, perhaps without being aware of it, Lindsey expresses the basic secret of prostitution and the solution brought about by the sexual crisis: *Decline of prostitution as a result of the inclusion of female youth into sexual life.*

This active and aggressively inquiring attitude of mind on the part of girls has of late years become general rather than exceptional. Also, it is more and more unconcealed. The reason is that social and economic conditions have placed these girls more on a level with men. Many of them, when they leave school, take positions in which they make more money than the boys they go with. The result is that many a youth finds himself subject to rather contemptuous inspection by the young woman of his choice.

(“REVOLT,” p. 121)

I have at hand certain figures which indicate with certainty that for every case of sex delinquency discovered, a very large number completely escape detection. For instance, out of 495 girls of high-school age—though not all of them were in high school—who admitted to me that they had had sex experiences with boys, only about 25 became pregnant. That is about 5 per cent, a ratio of one in twenty. The others avoided pregnancy, some by luck, others because they had a knowledge of more or less effective contraceptive methods—a knowledge, by the way, which I find to be more common among them than is generally supposed.

Now the point is this: First, that three-fourths of that list of nearly 500 girls came to me of their own accord for one reason or another. Some were pregnant, some were diseased, some were remorseful, some wanted counsel, and so on. Second, the thing that always brought them to me was their acute need for help of some kind. Had they not

felt that need, they would not have come. For every girl who came for help, there must have been a great many, a majority, who did *not* come because they did not want help, and therefore kept their own counsel.

In other words, that 500—covering a period of less than two years—represented a small group, drawn from all levels of society, that didn't know the ropes, and got into trouble of one kind or another; but there was as certainly a much larger group that did not know the ropes, and never came around at all. My own opinion is that for every girl who comes to me for help because she is pregnant, or diseased, or in need of comfort, there are many more who do not come because they escape scot free of consequences, or else because circumstances are such that they can meet the situation themselves. Hundreds, for instance, resort to the abortionist. I don't guess this, I know it.

(“REVOLT,” p. 64f.)

What are Lindsey's conclusions from his findings, crushing as they are from the standpoint of conservative morality?

I need not say that this is a difficult and dangerous problem. It is one which cannot be met by denunciation or watchfulness on the part of adults. It can be met only by a voluntarily adopted code of manners—by genuine internal restraints approved and adopted by the young people themselves. Such a code can be called into free and spontaneous action only by education of the frankest and most thorough-going sort.

(“REVOLT,” p. 59f.)

What is this code of manners? What, concretely, has Lindsey in mind? How are such “genuine inner restraints” to be achieved? No inhibitions could be more “genuine” than those which are dinned into youth everywhere by the parental home, the school and the church; for there are no other inhibitions than those coming from the environment, and nature knows of no “moral law.” And, what is the result of centuries of suppressing adolescent sexuality? Precisely what Lindsey himself describes.

Lindsey gets into insoluble contradictions. On the one hand, he establishes facts which show the decline of conservative mo-

rality among adolescents. On the other hand, he arrives, from these very facts, at demands which mean nothing more nor less than a re-establishment of this same morality, though he himself finds that this morality is declining and partly approves of this fact. In spite of everything, he cannot free himself of the *ideology of compulsive monogamous marriage and the demand for chastity on the part of the girl*. Thus he writes, for example:

Years ago I had in my charge a girl of 17 who, when I became acquainted with her five years before, had already had relations with several school boys. Immoral? Bad? Poppycock! She was ignorant. One talk with me ended it; she became one of the finest young women in Denver. No casual male would dare cross her path. She is very beautiful, has a remarkable mind, and some time ago was married to a youth who, I trust, deserves her.

(“REVOLT,” p. 116)

What all this means is that Lindsey only mitigates conservative moralistic evaluation; he does not take a stand *against* it; he does not draw, from all his facts, the conclusion of its fiasco and definite decline. The older generation said the girl was “immoral, bad”; Lindsey says she is merely “ignorant.” I doubt that she was ignorant. She knew very well what she was doing; but she landed, inevitably, in conventional marriage as a girl in conservative society should. In doing so, she did not become more “knowing” in the sense of sexual knowledge; Lindsey only made her more “knowing” with regard to the results which threatened should she fail to conform to conservative sexual mores. In summary, then, Lindsey finds:

1. That social yardsticks change:

To say that that happened when this kind of folly was at its height and that the hysteria has since died down—that it was therefore just a passing brain storm on the part of youth after the war, is nonsense. Concealment today is more skillful and more general, because the thing isn’t new any longer; but if the adult population of this country think the relative calm on the surface means that there is nothing

happening any more beneath the surface, they are living in a fool's paradise. Youth is shrewder, more sophisticated, more contemptuous of its elders, and more coldly bent on following its own path than it ever was before. Nor does that necessarily imply that it is wholly an evil path, nor that they are all, as the saying goes, hell bent for destruction. It does mean that they are changing our social code; and in my judgment they are going to win through, if not with us, then without us.

("REVOLT," p. 53f.)

2. That the economic inhibitions lose their strength, especially with female youth:

The external restraints, economic restraints that were once so potent, have gone never to return; *and the sole question now is how soon and how effectively will the internal restraints of a voluntarily accepted code, which alone can keep people going straight, take their place.* I think this is already happening. I don't think this younger generation is just a blindfolded bull in a china shop.

("REVOLT," p. 54)

3. That the youth of today is "relatively the most normal and the most sane generation the world has ever seen." ("REVOLT," p. 54.)

4. That the replacement of the brothel by girls of the same class is better and more moral:

For in the past, notwithstanding the Red Light District and its ruined women, the boys who helped by their patronage to make that District possible stood excellent chances of becoming good citizens, husbands and fathers; but the girl denizens of that world did not. Thus these new conditions, in spite of the increase of sex experiences among girls, as compared with the days of the Red Light District, would seem to have brought with them less that is destructive to womanhood than did the old order with its stricter conventions, its savage punishments, and its hypocritical double standard of "morality." I don't say, mind you, that the new order needs no mending; I merely insist that it contains more essential morality than did the old; and

that, all calamity howlers to the contrary notwithstanding, we have *not* gone backward.

(“REVOLT,” p. 72)

5. That the girls of today “know the male animal”:

Once a “nice” girl would have considered such advances an insult. Now, though she may refuse, she is not so likely to be offended. She is too sophisticated for that, and knows enough about the male animal to understand that his impulse is a normal one. Whether such frankness between boys and girls is a gain or the reverse I shall not try to consider at this point. It is, however, quite in keeping with the very evident determination of these young people to call a spade a spade; and we adults have it to reckon with, whether we like it or not.

(“REVOLT,” p. 67)

6. “Sex is simply a biological fact. It is as much so as the appetite for food. Like the appetite for food it is neither legal nor illegal, moral nor immoral.” (“REVOLT,” p. 127.)

In his conclusions, however, Lindsey does not inquire into the reasons of the *failure* of the sexual revolution of youth, but judges it from a moralistic viewpoint:

By its departures, *en masse*, from ancient standards, it has doubtless achieved some real progress; but its individual members have simply jumped from one form of slavery into another. License is bondage; liberty, on the contrary, is a free obedience to laws more compelling and difficult than human law, and far more exacting. Youth, unhelped by any wisdom but its own, often confuses the two.

(“REVOLT,” p. 102f.)

In the “more exacting laws” we recognize the ways and demands of conservative society, in their compulsion the lack of a social basis for a sex-economic living of youth, the determination of society not to let youth escape the clutches of the vassal factory, the authoritarian family. And conservative youth cannot have “wisdom of their own,” they cannot allow themselves to have it, because they are themselves materially interested in the

existing social order, notwithstanding the fact that it is the very social order which creates all the difficulties of their sex life.

How is it possible, one must ask, that even a man like Lindsey, this admirable and courageous champion of youth, is not able to draw the inevitable conclusions; that he, too, seems to be moralistically prejudiced and thus hampered in his fight for youth? Perhaps we may here get a glimpse at the secret of why conservative society insists so strictly on the demand for abstinence, in spite of its patent fiasco. Lindsey writes:

She could live with him "in sin" later, after the marriage ceremony, and it would be all right. Where do they get their logic? *Did that relationship really smirch and defile her, or was she at fault simply because she was violating the social code?* The distinction is extremely important. We may admit that she was at fault in her pre-nuptial intimacy; but the fault lay in her violation of a social convention, and not in a mysterious "defilement" conjured up by our tribal superstitions.

("REVOLT," p. 118)

Thus, according to Lindsey, she was not "defiled" by her premarital sexual activity, but she "violated the social code." The demand for chastity on the part of the girl could not possibly be more clearly defined: She was "at fault" in having premarital sexual intercourse. Absolutely? No, relatively. That is, relative to the fact that conservative society, *for ideological and economic reasons, cannot sanction premarital intercourse because this would undermine compulsive marriage and its ideology.* Says Lindsey, with regard to the rebellious girl Mary:

And yet this is by no means to say that marriage is a failure and should go into the discard to make way for Free Love or any other social Ism. However imperfect the institution may be *we can't do without it.* It must be preserved by means of sane and cautious alterations in its code . . .

("REVOLT," p. 140)

There cannot be the slightest doubt: *Sexual freedom of youth*

*means undermining marriage (in the sense of compulsive marriage); sexual suppression serves the purpose of making youth capable of this kind of marriage.* This is what, in the last analysis, all the talk about the "cultural" significance of marriage and of adolescent "morality" reduces itself to. This is the reason—and the sole reason—*why the problem of marriage cannot be discussed without the problem of adolescent sexuality*, and vice versa. Both of them are only links in the chain of conservative ideology. If the connection between the two is in any way disturbed, youth is thrown into insoluble conflicts, for their sexual problem cannot be solved without solving the marriage problem, and this in turn not without the problems of economic independence of the woman and difficult problems of education and of economics.

Yet, in spite of his reserve, Lindsey was given the cold shoulder. He lost his judgeship.

The preceding passages were written in the summer of 1928, about two years before the publication of the first edition of this book. They formulated the result of a study of the sociological links between marriage morality and the demand for adolescent abstinence. A year later, I happened to find the statistical proof for my conclusions, in a paper by a physician at the Venerological Institute in Moscow.<sup>4</sup> This paper contained statistics about the connection between marital infidelity and the age of taking up sexual intercourse before marriage. Of those who took up sexual intercourse before the age of 17, 61.6% were unfaithful in marriage; of those who began having sexual intercourse between the ages of 17 and 21, 47.6%; and of those who lived in abstinence beyond the age of 21, only 17.2%. The author notes:

The earlier these people, on the average, established a sexual relationship, the less faithful were they in marriage, the more did they

<sup>4</sup> M. Barash, "Sex life of the workers of Moscow." *J. of Social Hygiene* 12, May 1926.

tend to occasional extramarital relationships . . . Those who established a sex life at an early age had an irregular sex life later on.

If it is true that the demand for adolescent abstinence is sociologically determined directly by the institution of marriage, and indirectly by the same economic interests as official conservative sex reform itself; if, further, there is statistical evidence for the fact that *early sexual intercourse makes people incapable of marriage* (in the sense of conservative marriage morality, "one partner for life"), then the purpose of the demand for sexual abstinence is clear. It serves the *purpose of creating a sexual structure which makes people incapable of any sex life except that of a strictly monogamous compulsive marriage* and which makes them submit weakly to the demands of society.

The ensuing pages show what this sexual structure is like, what are its effects on youth and what are the contradictions which it creates for the marital situation.

### 3. SOME MEDICAL, NON-ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS OF THE SEX LIFE OF YOUTH

The adolescent has only three possibilities: *abstinence*, *masturbation* (including homosexual activity and heterosexual excitation), and *sexual intercourse*. One has to be clear as to the viewpoint from which one discusses the problem. Here again, there are three points of view: the ethical, the sex-economic and the sociological. Ethics provide neither an access to the problem nor a solution for it. Concretely, the problem narrows down to the question of the sexual economy of the individual and to the interest of society in its members.

As we have seen, authoritarian society has the greatest interest in the suppression of adolescent sexuality. The perpetuation of authoritarian marriage and family and the production of the vassal structure require this suppression. The reactionary moral philosopher—confusing *reactionary* society and *human* society—thinks that human society as such would be endangered if youth, as he puts it, were to "live out" their sexuality. But



whether this is so is precisely the question. The concrete question is what social interests conflict with sex-economic interests, in other words, whether one interest has to be jeopardized if the other is to be safeguarded. One also might consider the interest of youth in the first place and ask what are the relative advantages and disadvantages to them of abstinence, masturbation and sexual intercourse, respectively.

*a) Sexual abstinence in puberty.*

Here, we have to examine the manifestations of *total* abstinence, because anything else comes under the heading of masturbation in a wider sense of the word.

It is an incontrovertible fact that, around the age of 14, sexuality—as a result of increased endocrine activity and the maturing of the genital apparatus—enters a most active phase. The sexual urge, *normally*, is toward sexual intercourse. If, now, such a large number of adolescents do not have a *conscious* desire for sexual intercourse, this is not, as generally and erroneously assumed, an expression of biological immaturity, but the *result of education* which causes even the thought of such an action to be repressed. It is important to realize this fact if one wants to see things as they are and not as authoritarian society and the church wish us to see them. Adolescents who have freed themselves of this repression know very well that sexual intercourse is what they want. *This repression of sexual ideas, particularly that of sexual intercourse, is a prerequisite of abstinence.* The more frequent situation is perhaps that while the idea of the sexual act is not repressed, it is divested of psychic interest or associated with ideas of fear and disgust to such an extent that it has no practical significance. In order to insure abstinence, more than this is needed: *the repression also of sexual excitation.* If that is achieved, there is peace, at least for a certain time. The adolescent is then spared the painful masturbation conflict and the dangerous struggle with his environment, a struggle which is inescapable when the adolescent has

a conscious and therefore unconquerable desire for sexual intercourse.

After the first stages of puberty, most adolescents show a definite change in their attitude toward sexuality. After the age of about 16 or 17, they have a much more negative attitude toward it. The analysis of this behavior shows that the *striving for pleasure has been replaced by a fear of pleasure*.

They have acquired *pleasure anxiety*. This pleasure anxiety, or fear of pleasurable excitation, is something basically different from the fear of punishment for sexual activities which, if intense, usually is a fear of castration. The increasingly defensive attitude toward sexuality is anchored in this pleasure anxiety. This has the following reason. As a result of the chronic prohibitions, the nature of sexual excitation itself undergoes an alteration. Clinical experience shows that *inhibited* pleasure turns into unpleasurable or even *painful* genital excitation. Thus pleasurable excitation becomes a source of unpleasure and this forces the adolescent to fight against his sexuality and to suppress it. Every sexologically experienced physician is familiar with a peculiar habit of adolescents: that of artificially suppressing erections. They do this because the erection which is not followed by gratification becomes painful. In girls, the fear of strong excitation is even more marked. The excitation is experienced as danger. The fear of punishment for sexual activity, acquired from the outside, becomes anchored in this pleasure anxiety. In this way, the adolescent very often becomes himself the advocate of sexual prohibitions.

Sexual excitation without gratification can never be tolerated for any considerable length of time. There are only two solutions: *suppression* of the sexual excitation, or *gratification*. The former always leads to psychic and somatic disturbances, the latter—in our society—to social conflicts.

Abstinence is dangerous and absolutely harmful to health. The suppressed sexual energy expresses itself in different ways. Either, a nervous disturbance appears very soon, or the adolescent begins to indulge in daydreams; these interfere seriously with his

work. True, those who refuse to see the connection between sexual excitation and nervous disorders may easily say that abstinence is not harmful or that it is practicable in most cases. They only see that the adolescent does live in abstinence and conclude that, therefore, it is practicable. What they overlook is that the adolescent can do it only at the price of acquiring a neurosis and other difficulties. They may say that the neurosis is due to a "neurotic constitution" or such things as the "will to power." They make things easy for themselves; they spare themselves the necessity of thinking about the difficult problem of adolescent sexuality and that of the social order.

Many will object that not all adolescents who live in abstinence will immediately become neurotic. True enough, but that does not alter the fact that the neurosis is bound to make its appearance later, at a time when the individual has to meet the demands of "legal" sexual activity. Sex-economic clinical experience shows that those patients have the most unfavorable prognosis who never dared to masturbate. They suppressed their sexuality, perhaps successfully for some time, and did not use their sexual apparatus. Then, by the time they reach the age when they could engage in sexual activity with the sanction of society, the sexual apparatus refuses to function, it has become rusty, as it were. But even if one knows this one is careful not to let the adolescent know it, because what justification would there be left for practising abstinence? One could no longer advocate athletics as a way out of the sexual misery.

In many discussions of the masturbation problem, people have pointed to the possibility of the *diversion of sexual energy by athletics*. To this I have had to reply that while athletic activity is the best way of reducing the sexual drive, a great many athletes are so successful in this that later on they find that they no longer have their sexuality at their disposal. One is again and again surprised at the great number of vigorous, athletically trained individuals who present serious sexual disturbances. Their athletic activities were in part a fight against their sexuality. Since, however, they could not spend all their sexual

energies in their sport, they finally had to resort to repression with all its inevitable results. It is true that athletics are a means of reducing sexual excitation. But they are as incapable of solving the sex problem of youth as is any other measure which aims at deadening sexual excitation.

If anybody who is aware of the consequences wants to kill his sexuality, let him. We have no intention of forcing a satisfactory sex life on anybody, but we say this: If anybody wants to live in abstinence, at the risk of neurotic disease and a curtailment of his work and happiness, let him. The others should attempt to arrive at an orderly, satisfactory sex life as soon as the sex urge can no longer be overlooked. It is our duty to point out the fact that adolescent sexual abstinence results in an atrophy of sexuality, in its flowing back into infantile and perverse activities and nervous disorders. Tragic are the patients who come to seek help at the ages of 35, 40, 50 or even 60, neurotic, disgruntled, lonely and sick of living. Usually, they pride themselves on not having "indulged excessively," by which they mean the avoidance of masturbation and early sexual intercourse.

The dangers of sexual abstinence are very often underestimated even by otherwise sound writers. This has two main reasons. First, they are ignorant of the connection between abstinence and a sexual disturbance which may appear only much later; second, they lack the experience of the psychotherapist or sex counsellor who constantly sees the connections between nervous disturbances and sexual abstinence in great numbers of cases. Thus, Fritz Brupbacher wrote in 1925, in an otherwise excellent pamphlet: "There is much philosophizing in all kinds of publications about the harm and usefulness of abstinence. He who likes abstinence may practice it. It will do him no harm . . . At any rate, abstinence is healthier than venereal disease."

Later on, Brupbacher gave up this attitude. He had overlooked the fact that a tendency to protracted abstinence is in itself already a pathological symptom, indicating rather complete repression of conscious sexual desire. It always—sooner or later—

damages the love life and reduces achievement in work. This is a proved fact. To recommend abstinence to youths means laying the basis for a neurosis which will break out sooner or later, or at least for a diminished joy in life and achievement in work. Incidentally, from the point of view of psychic economy, one would doubt whether abstinence is healthier than venereal disease. The latter one can get rid of if one seeks the proper therapeutic help. The pathological character changes, however, can hardly ever be completely eliminated. In addition, we do not have as many capable psychotherapists as would be needed to cure the evils created by protracted abstinence. The venereal diseases, of course, should not be underestimated. But as a rule they are used as a bugbear, as a means of enforcing sexual repression. At any rate, the alternative is *not* abstinence or venereal disease; for disease can be avoided if one has intercourse only with beloved partners of one's own environment instead of with prostitutes.

In speaking about the abstinence of adolescents, we mean those between the ages of 15 and 18. The authoritarian demand is for abstinence until "the closing of the epiphyses," i.e., about the age of 24. The following is from a column of Questions and Answers by an individual-psychological youth counsellor and appeared in the Viennese paper *Morgen* on March 18, 1929:

G. Sch.—Your question deals with the problem which has been often discussed in biological circles, that of the onset of "sexual activities." The Roman writer Tacitus extols the ancient Germans for never touching a woman before the age of 24. *This should also be the rule with us.* The sexual drive, one of the most powerful in human life, *cannot be allowed* to come out prematurely, and you are quite right in seeking in sports a discharge to which you are *not yet entitled* in sexuality. If your friends, though they may be younger, act differently, they act *against* the laws of sexual hygiene. The famous authority in the field of hygiene, Geheimrat Professor Dr. Max von Gruber, has never ceased to preach, in his spirited way, that sexual abstinence has never done anybody any harm.

Is the appeal to Gruber and the ancient Germans an argument? This same Professor Gruber had gone as far as claiming that abstinence was not only not harmful, but actually useful in that the semen which was not spent was re-absorbed in the body and provided a source of protein. I know of a better and more pleasant way of getting protein: eating meat.

Among the Viennese youth counsellors was a clergyman. A 22-year-old girl received the following counsel from him (according to a written report from the girl):

By way of introduction, I said I had read about the consultation center in the newspaper and that I was at the end of my rope. Dr. P. then encouraged me to talk freely.

I told him that my boy friend and I were very much in love with each other but that for some time there had been such a tension between us that I did not know what to do. I added that I had tried consolation in religion, but in vain.

Then Dr. P. asked me questions. How old was I? 22. How long had I known my boy friend? 4 years. How old was he? 24. To that he replied that he knew young people who had known each other for 8 or 9 years and who had kept themselves clean. He did not explain what he meant by clean but added that he could well imagine two people who loved each other very much and still did not have any sexual thoughts with regard to each other.

He then asked what was the attitude of my fiancé. I said that, of course, he also suffered enormously under these conditions and I could no longer stand seeing him suffer so. He then asked what were the conditions at home and I told him that I could not count on any support from there.

Dr. P. thought I ought to talk things over with my mother and try to get married as soon as possible. In this connection he said, among other things, that the commands of the church had a deeper meaning, as, for example, the command, *Thou shalt not be unchaste*. Because, he said, if anything happened, the child would not have a loving family.

When I replied it would be years before I would be in a financial position to get married and that I would not have the strength to go on like this for so long, Dr. P. said I should not think of a year

ahead, but should persevere from day to day and steel myself. He also asked whether I met my friend alone and whether my parents knew about it. I said, yes. Whereupon he advised me to avoid being alone with my friend in order not to get into unpleasant situations and to avoid tormenting each other.

Dr. P. tried to encourage me and said all that was needed was my own belief that I could carry on. Advising me again to get married as soon as possible, he discharged me by saying, "God bless you."<sup>5</sup>

The nature-healers, too, engage in sex counseling. This is the prescription given to a young man of 17 who suffered from daily seminal emissions and who consulted a nature-healer:

Three times a day a pinch of gentian powder in a wafer. In addition, cook 30 grams of crushed hemp in  $\frac{1}{2}$  litre of milk; take 1 tablespoon 3 or 4 times a day. In addition, take, every other day, a sitz-bath of about 20 minutes in an infusion of calamus. In addition, have somebody give you a good massage of the spine every evening with the following mixture: spirit of arnica, 90 grams; spirit of lavender and spirit of balm-mint, 4 grams each; spirit of peppermint and thyme, 1 gram each. Mix well.

Such and similar ridiculous "advice" stems from the complete helplessness of the youth counsellor, whether he believes in the efficacy of his remedies or not, whether he is convinced of the futility of the demand for abstinence or not. He is, apart from his own inhibitions, nothing but an unconscious executive organ of the reactionary sexual order, one who will make adolescents capable of compulsive marriage and subservience to authoritarian society. We shall soon show that the knowledge of the truth does not make his situation easier by any means; on the contrary.

### *b) Masturbation.*

Masturbation can mitigate the harmfulness of abstinence only to a very limited degree. It can regulate the household of sexual

---

<sup>5</sup> This servant of God and of reactionary morality was defended by a "Socialist" youth counsellor with the argument that, after all, one had to employ counsellors for religious youths also, and that could only be ministers. Such tolerance is nothing short of touching. Only, it spells ruin for the adolescents.

energy only if it takes place without any considerable guilt feelings and disturbances of the processes of sexual excitation and sexual discharge, and only if the lack of a sexual partner is not keenly felt. True, it can help *healthy* adolescents in weathering the first storms of puberty. But since, as a result of early sexual development, only few adolescents reach puberty with a relatively unimpaired functioning, it fulfils even this function only in relatively few cases. Only a small minority of adolescents have freed themselves enough from the moralistic influences of their education to be able to masturbate without guilt feelings. As a rule, they fight the impulse to masturbate, with varying degrees of success. If they do not succeed in suppressing the impulse, they masturbate with the most severe inhibitions and harmful practices, such as holding back the ejaculation. This results, at best, in a neurasthenic disturbance. If they succeed in suppressing the impulse, they fall back into the abstinence from which they tried to save themselves by masturbation. Only now the situation has become much worse, because sexual excitation and the phantasies which were aroused in the meantime make abstinence even more intolerable than before. Only few find the sex-economic solution, that of sexual intercourse.

Until a very short time ago, masturbation, quite generally, was a bugbear. Recently—due to the realization that the demand for abstinence cannot ever be enforced and because masturbation is considered the lesser evil than sexual intercourse—it has become the fashion to call masturbation entirely harmless and natural. This, however, is only conditionally true. True, masturbation is better than abstinence. But in the long run it becomes unsatisfactory and quite disturbing because soon the lack of a love object becomes painful; furthermore, when it no longer satisfies, it creates disgust and guilt feelings. Under these conditions—continued sexual excitation plus guilt—it becomes a compulsion. Even under the most favorable conditions it has the disadvantage of forcing phantasy activity more and more into neurotic and previously relinquished infantile channels, which in turn makes repressions necessary. In this case, the danger of a neurosis in-



creases with the duration of the masturbatory mode of gratification.

Most adolescents show a shy, awkward behavior. The others, who are lively and able, are always those who have managed to take the step from masturbation to sexual intercourse. In the long run, masturbation also weakens realistic behavior; the facility with which gratification—such as it is—can be obtained often paralyzes the ability to enter the fight for a suitable partner.

The conclusions from all this are: A change has occurred in the prevailing attitude toward adolescent masturbation. Previously, the bugbear of “adolescent sexual intercourse” created the fiction that *abstinence* was harmless or even useful. More recently, it has created the fiction that adolescent *masturbation* is natural, completely harmless and *the* solution of the puberty problem. One like the other is an evasion of the most ticklish question:

*c) The sexual intercourse of adolescents.*

This question has to be reviewed in its fundamental aspects as well as in its concrete economic and educational aspects. Thus far, it has been avoided in all the literature as if by common agreement.

We have shown that it is the interests of authoritarian society which indirectly (by way of the family and marriage) cause the restrictions of adolescent sexuality with all its misery. This restriction is part and parcel of the system of this society; the attendant misery is an unintended result. This being so, a sex-economic solution is not possible within this society. This becomes obvious as soon as we examine the conditions under which our adolescents enter the phase of sexual maturity. We shall neglect here the influences of class differences and examine only the influence of the ideological atmosphere and the social institutions.

1. To begin with, the adolescent has to overcome a mountain of inner inhibitions, the results of a sex-negative education. On the average, his genitality is either altogether inhibited (this is

true particularly of girls), or else disturbed or homosexually deflected. Thus, purely from the point of view of his inner make-up, he is not equal to the task of establishing a heterosexual relationship.

2. Either his biological sexual maturity is neurotically inhibited, or, as is very common, the psychic infantilism, the fixation in infantile attitudes toward the parents, has created a discrepancy between psychic and physical maturity.

3. In materially underprivileged people, adolescents may be retarded physically also. Then we have physical as well as psychic underdevelopment in the presence of sexual maturity.

4. There is not only a severe sexual taboo against adolescent sexuality. There is in addition, the complete lack of help on the part of society; more than that, every kind of active measure to prevent the adolescent from taking up sexual intercourse. For example:

a) The *active prevention of factual education* of the adolescents in problems of their sexuality. What has become so fashionable under the name of "sex education" is not only a half-way measure, it is worse. It only increases confusion, because it starts out on something which has inevitable consequences, without the determination to draw these consequences. For instance, a girl of 14 is told the nature of masturbation, but one is careful not to mention the nature of sexual excitations. This is an illustration of what we said elsewhere: The exclusive biological contemplation of sexual life is a diversion manoeuvre. The adolescent is not very much interested in knowing how the ovum and the spermatozoon unite into the "mystery" of a new living being; but he is vitally, burningly, interested in the "mystery" of the sexual excitation with which he so desperately struggles. But what logical argument would be left to keep the adolescent from sexual intercourse if one told him the truth: that he has become biologically ready for sexual intercourse and that his sundry difficulties are the result of his urging and yet unsatisfied sexuality? Since he cannot be told the truth, whatever "sex education" he gets will only increase his difficulties. This is, of course,

in accordance with our social system. The sexual crippling of the adolescents is only the logical continuation of the crippling of infantile sexuality.

b) The problems of *housing* and *contraception*. With the general housing shortage, even the adults among the workers' population have hardly a possibility to be alone together without being disturbed. But for the adolescents this problem causes an untold misery. Characteristically, this problem is never mentioned by our sex reformers. For what could they reply to a brash youngster who asked them why society does not provide for them in this respect? Instead, they talk to the youngsters about their "responsibilities" until they forget their own responsibility for the fact that youngsters have sexual intercourse in corridors, in cars, in barns and behind fences, always afraid of detection.

Or even the question of contraception! Brash youngsters might ask naively what interest society has *not* to inform them about the best methods of contraception or not to help them if one of them might fail.

It goes without saying that in a society which does not recognize extramarital sexual intercourse, which does not even take measures for a hygienic sex life among adults, such questions cannot be answered or solved.

It also goes without saying that without a different sexual education of children and without the solution of the problems of housing and contraception, it would be irresponsible and dangerous simply to tell youth to go ahead and have sexual intercourse. Such a procedure would be no less harmful than is the opposite, the preaching of abstinence.

Our task has been to show the contradictions in the present situation and to show the impossibility of solving these problems under present conditions. I trust I have succeeded in this. And yet, if we do not want to be charlatans and cowards, we must affirm the sexuality of adolescents in principle, must help them where we can and do everything in our power to pave the way for its final liberation. By now, the reader will have realized that this is an enormous task and a great responsibility.

Now he will also understand better the halfheartedness and inconsistency of present-day sexual education. It has the following characteristics: it is always too late, it behaves mysteriously and it always evades the essential point, sexual *pleasure*. Those people who are against any sex education are more consistent. They represent clearly the reactionary point of view. They have to be fought because they are enemies of scientific truth and consistency, but, in a way, they are more clear-cut than those would-be reformers who actually believe that they are changing anything with their teachings. What they actually do is to confuse the issue, to camouflage the necessity of social change.

This does not mean, of course, that one should proceed like the above-quoted clergyman P. In the individual case, the sex counsellor will, after thorough evaluation of the social, psychic, and economic situation, not prohibit sexual intercourse to an adolescent who is ready for it, but will recommend it. Individual help and social measures are two different things.

From a social standpoint, things remain the same for the time being: children continue to be educated to asceticism and adolescents continue to be told that cultural achievement requires abstinence, or that masturbation will console them until they are able to get married.

The contradiction between a progressive collectivization of living and the sex-negative social atmosphere must lead to a crisis in adolescent sexuality for which there is no solution in authoritarian society. As long as youth was altogether tied to the family, as long as the girls, exposed to little sexual excitation, were content to wait for the man who eventually would take care of them, as long as the boys lived in abstinence, masturbated or went to prostitutes—so long was there only silent suffering, neurosis or sexual brutality. Under present conditions of living, the sexual needs which strive for liberation are hemmed in by the inhibitions acquired through education on the one hand, and by the objections of reactionary society on the other hand. Nothing at all is changed in this by the vague talk of the

sex reformers, or by such advice as "hard mattresses," "diversion in athletics or good books" or a "meatless diet."

I contend that the youth of today has an infinitely harder time of it than the youth of, say, the turn of the century. Then they were still able to repress completely. Today, the sources of adolescent life have opened up, but youth lacks the help of society as well as the structural strength to use these sources. To stop them again is no longer possible.

*The sexual crisis of youth is an integral part of the crisis of the authoritarian social order. Within this framework it remains unsolvable on a mass scale.*

## CHAPTER VII

### COMPULSIVE MARRIAGE AND LASTING SEXUAL RELATIONSHIP

[*Addition, 1945:* There is an enormous confusion with regard to the concepts of "marriage" and "family." As a result of this confusion, the physician who is called upon to give advice in questions of personal living keeps coming in conflict with the *formal* concept of marriage. The general impression is that to the unconscious of individuals who are afraid of sexuality, the formal marriage certificate is nothing but a *permit to indulge in sexual intercourse*. This is shown particularly clearly in the case of what is called "war marriages": Couples who, before the man's departure, wish to experience the happiness of the sexual embrace, rush to the license bureau for permission in the form of a marriage certificate. Then, they are separated for several years, and the separation gradually extinguishes the memory of the partner. If they are young, they will meet other love partners, for which no sensible individual will condemn them. Yet, the marriage license continues to exert its binding influence, though it has become a purely formal, empty one. The young people who, before a separation of uncertain length and outcome, wished to give each other happiness, now find themselves caught in a net. Much has been written, especially in this country, about the misery stemming from such "marriages." But in all these writings, nobody has bared the core of the problem: the demand for the legalization of a love experience. Nevertheless, everybody knows that "We want to get *married*" really means "We want to embrace each other sexually."

Another source of confusion and misery is the conflict between the legal (ecclesiastical) and the *factual* content of the concept

of "marriage." To the formal legal mind, it is an entirely different thing than to the objective psychiatrist. To the lawyer, marriage is a union of two people of different sex on the basis of a legal document. To the psychiatrist, it is an emotional attachment on the basis of a sexual union, usually with the wish for children. To the psychiatrist, it is *not* a marriage if the partners merely possess a marriage certificate but otherwise do not have a marriage partnership. *The marriage certificate in itself does not constitute a marriage.* To the psychiatrist, it is a marriage when two people of different sex love each other, take care of each other, live together and, by having children, extend the union into a family. To the psychiatrist, marriage is a practical and factual union of a sexual nature, *regardless of whether there is a marriage certificate or not.* To the psychiatrist, the marriage certificate is nothing but an official confirmation of a sexual relationship which was decided upon, established and lived *by the partners.* In his eyes, it is the partners, and not the court officials, who determine, in a practical way, whether or not a marriage exists.

Human sexual structure has degenerated as a result of compulsive morality; under these circumstances, the marriage certificate represents a protection for the woman against possible irresponsibility of the man. Insofar—and *only insofar*—does the marriage certificate fulfil a function. The consciousness of the *factual* character of *natural* marriages without marriage certificate is widespread and deep-rooted. In the U.S.A., as well as in France, Scandinavia and many other countries, there is the "common-law marriage"; in most states of the U.S.A., it is legally recognized. Where it is not, that does *not* mean, however, that, as many people with sexual guilt feelings believe, factual marriage without marriage certificate is *forbidden*. There are no laws against factual marriage without marriage certificate.

It goes without saying that from the point of view of rational mental hygiene the prototype of a lasting sexual relationship is the factual and not the formal marriage. Rational mental hygiene aims at *inner* responsibility and not responsibility enforced from without. It considers such enforcement of responsibility from

without an expedient for the mastery of antisocial actions but not as a desirable end.

The interest in moral self-regulation calls for a strong fight and stringent laws against the effects of the emotional plague in this field: against defamation of marriage partners without a marriage certificate and of their children by individuals afflicted with the emotional plague who are incapable of comprehending this highly moral type of social behavior, let alone are capable of living it themselves; against the deeply immoral, pathological blackmailing and financial indecencies made possible by the marriage laws based on compulsive morality; against the sexual lascivety provoked by the divorces of unhappy, formal "marriages"; against the nonsensicality of speaking of "marriage" in the case of relationships governed by nothing but hatred and meanness, etc.

In this sphere, practically everything is upside down, and an Augean stable is to be cleansed. What is chiefly necessary is this: Love relationships must be protected against any interference by economic interests; *stringent laws must be enacted against the defamation of natural and decent love relationships and of the children springing from them; steps must be taken to eliminate sexual guilt feelings and to replace external compulsive morality by inner responsibility.* The times are ripe for this. Nowhere is the necessity of a radical reform of laws denied, except, perhaps, in those circles which derive economic gain from the existence of a sexual legislation which is obsolete and disastrous from the point of view of mental hygiene.]

Marriage, which in its present form only represents a stage in the development of the institution of marriage in general, is the result of a compromise between economic and sexual interests. The sexual interests, certainly, are not such as many conservative sexologists would have us believe, namely, sexual relations with one and the same partner for life, and procreation. We will have to examine the two aspects of the marriage problem—the economic and the sexual—separately. We will have to make a strict distinction between that form of sexual relationship which is based on sexual needs and which tends to become lasting, and



that other which is based on economic interests and the position of woman and children in our society. The former we call lasting sexual relationship, the latter, marriage (short for compulsive marriage).

### 1. THE LASTING SEXUAL RELATIONSHIP

The social prerequisites of the lasting sexual relationship would be economic independence of the woman, social care and education of the children, lack of interference by economic interests. Temporary, purely sensual relationships would compete with it. From the point of view of sexual economy, the temporary relationship has disadvantages compared with the lasting sexual relationship. These can be studied particularly well in our society. For in no other society has promiscuity been as common as in the age of the flourishing ideology of strict monogamy; a promiscuity, furthermore, which is emotionally debased and sex-economically worthless because of its mercenary character.

The temporary sexual relationship, the extreme of which is the one-hour or one-night relationship, is different from the lasting sexual relationship in that it lacks the tender interest in the partner. The tender relationship with the partner may have several motives:

1. *A sexual attachment as the result of mutual pleasurable sensual experiences.* It contains a good deal of sexual *gratitude* for the sexual pleasure of the past, and a sexual *tie* (not to be confused with neurotic bondage) because of the pleasure waiting in the future. Both together are the basic elements of the natural love relationship.

2. *An attachment to the partner as a result of repressed hatred: reactive love.* This we shall discuss later, in connection with compulsive marriage. It makes sexual gratification impossible.

3. *An attachment due to ungratified sensual needs.* It is characterized by overestimation of the partner, and is due to an inhibited sensuality and an unconscious expectation of a certain kind of sexual gratification. It readily changes into hatred.

Lasting absence of tenderness in a sexual relationship reduces sensual experience and with that sexual gratification. This is

true, however, only from a certain age on, that is, when the sensual storms of puberty have blown over and a certain equilibrium of sexual emotions has established itself. *The tender attitudes*—unless sensuality has become neurotically suppressed—*do not attain their full strength until a certain gratification of the sensual needs has taken place.* These tender attitudes should not be confused with the childlike pseudo-tenderness exhibited by admiring youths who unconsciously are after a female ideal which represents their mothers, and who at the same time repress their sensuality under the pressure of guilt feelings. The free, at first temporary sexual relationships as we see them in certain strata of our youth, seem to me to be the natural, healthy forms of sexual experience corresponding to their age. They are similar to the sex life of adolescents in primitive societies. True, they do not lack a high degree of tenderness, but this does not tend to make the relationship a lasting one. It is not the lascivious desire for new sexual stimuli that we see in the neurotic polygamy of adult men of the world but rather, a bubbling over of a sensuality which has just become mature, and its attachment to any suitable sexual object which may present itself. It is like the pleasurable motility of the young animal which also diminishes later on. The sexual agility of healthy youth is not difficult to distinguish from such neurotic phenomena as hysterical hyperagility.

Short-lived sexual relationships at a mature age are not of necessity neurotic. More than that, if we honestly, without any moralistic prejudice, draw the conclusions from our sexological experience, we must say that he or she who never had the courage or the strength to enter such a relationship was under the pressure of an irrational, that is, neurotic, guilt feeling. On the other hand, clinical experience shows beyond any doubt that those people who are incapable of establishing a lasting relationship are also dominated by an infantile fixation of their love relationships, in other words, suffer from a sexual disorder. Either their tender strivings are anchored in some kind of homosexual attachment (typical, for example, in athletes, students and professional soldiers), or it is because a phantasy ideal makes any real sexual

object seem worthless. Very often, the unconscious background of a continued and unsatisfactory promiscuity is the fear of becoming attached to an object, because any such attachment has incestuous connotations, and incest-fear again and again acts as an inhibition. The most frequent mechanism here is a disturbance of orgasmic potency: the disappointment which every sexual act brings anew, prevents the establishment of a tender attachment to the partner.

The most important disadvantage of the temporary relationship, sex-economically speaking, is the fact that it does not allow the same complete sensual adaptation between the partners, and consequently not the same complete sexual gratification as the lasting sexual relationship. This is the most important sex-economic objection to the temporary relationship and the strongest argument for the lasting relationship. At this point, the proponents of the marriage ideology will heave a sigh of relief; they will see here a way of again smuggling in the moralistic lifelong monogamy. But we shall have to disappoint them again. For when we speak of a lasting relationship, we are not thinking of any definite period of time. Sex-economically, it is not important whether this relationship lasts weeks, months, two years or ten years. Neither do we mean that the relationship must or should be monogamous, because we do not establish norms.

As I have shown elsewhere,<sup>1</sup> the concept that the first sexual act with a virgin is the most satisfying act, that the honeymoon is the most gratifying period sexually, is erroneous. Such a concept is contradicted by all clinical experience. It results from the contrast between the lascivious desire for virginal women and the later blunting and the sexual emptiness in permanent monogamous marriage. Satisfactory sexual relationships between two people presuppose that a harmonization of their sexual rhythms has taken place. Only if the two partners get to know intimately the special sexual needs which are rarely conscious but nonetheless important, is a sex-economically sound sex life possible. To enter a marriage without having become mutually acquainted sexually is poor hygiene and usually leads to catastrophe.

---

<sup>1</sup> DIE FUNKTION DES ORGASMUS, 1927.

Another advantage of a gratifying permanent sexual relationship is that it makes the eternal quest for a suitable partner unnecessary and thus liberates time and energy for social achievement.

The capacity for a permanent sexual relationship presupposes the following:

*Full orgasmic potency*, i.e., no dissociation between tender and sensual sexuality;

The overcoming of incestual fixation and infantile sexual anxiety;

The absence of repression of any unsublimated sexual strivings, be they homosexual or non-genital;

Absolute affirmation of sexuality and *joie de vivre*;

Overcoming the basic elements of authoritarian sexual morality; capacity for mental companionship with the partner.

Looking at these prerequisites from the point of view of social conditions we are bound to admit that *none* of them can be realized in authoritarian society, that is by the masses, though possibly by individuals. Since the negation and repression of sexuality are specific and inseparable parts of authoritarian society, it follows of necessity that they also determine sexual education. Family education fosters incestuous fixation instead of loosening it; the inhibition of infantile sexual activity creates the dissociation between tender and sensual sexuality; it thus creates a sex-negative character structure with pregenital and homosexual tendencies; these in turn call for repression and lead to a weakening of sexuality. In addition, the education for the supremacy of the man makes companionship with the woman impossible.

The permanent sexual relationship contains ample material for conflict, no less than any other permanent relationship. What interests us here are not the general human difficulties but those that are specifically sexual. The basic difficulty of any permanent sexual relationship is *the conflict between the dulling (temporary or final) of sensual desire on the one hand and the increasing tender attachment to the partner on the other hand.*

In every sexual relationship—sooner or later, rarely or more frequently—periods of diminished sexual attraction or even of sensual indifference occur. This is an empirical fact against which no moralistic argument prevails. Sexual interest cannot be commanded. The greater the sensual and tender harmony between the partners, the less frequent, the less final will such episodes be. However, any sexual relationship is exposed to this dulling of sexual attraction. This fact would be of small significance were it not for the following facts:

1. The dulling may occur only in *one* partner but not the other.
2. At the present, most sexual relationships are tied also *economically* (economic dependence of woman and children).
3. Independent of these external difficulties, there is a difficulty which lies inherently in the permanent relationship itself and complicates the only solution: separation and finding another partner.

Everybody is constantly exposed to new sexual stimuli emanating from others than the partner. At a time when the relationship is at its height these stimuli remain without effect. Nevertheless, they cannot be eliminated; more than that, any attempt to eliminate them, like ecclesiastical prescriptions for modesty in dress or any other ascetic or moralistic social measure, will have the opposite effect, because the suppression of sexual demands never does anything but increase their urgency. The overlooking of this fundamental fact constitutes the tragedy—or comedy—of all ascetic sexual morality. The sexual stimuli are there. In every sexually healthy individual they arouse the desire for other sexual objects. In the beginning, due to the existence of a gratifying sexual relationship, these desires have little effect. The healthier the individual, the more conscious (i.e., not repressed) are these desires; and the more conscious they are, the easier are they to control. Naturally, such control is the more harmless the more it is guided by sex-economic instead of by moralistic considerations.

When, however, these desires for other objects become more urgent, they affect the existing sexual relationship, especially in the sense of accelerating the dulling. The unmistakable signs of

this dulling are a decrease of the sexual urge before the act and of the pleasure in the act. Sexual intercourse begins to become a habit and a duty. The decreased satisfaction with the partner and the desire for other objects add up and mutually reinforce each other. This cannot be averted either by good intentions or by "love techniques." This is when the critical stage of irritation toward the partner sets in; depending on temperament and education, this irritation may be expressed or suppressed. At any rate: as the analysis of such conditions shows again and again, the unconscious hatred of the partner keeps increasing. It is motivated by the partner's frustrating the desires for other objects. The fact that the unconscious hatred may become the more intense the more amiable and tolerant the partner is, is only seemingly a paradox. In that case the partner gives no reason for any personal and conscious hatred; at the same time he, or one's own love for him, is felt as a hindrance. The hatred becomes over-compensated and glossed over by extreme affection. This reactive affection born of hatred and the attendant guilt feelings are the specific basis of a sticky attachment and the very reason why people so often, even if they are not married, cannot separate, even if they have no longer anything to say to each other, even less anything to give to each other, and the continuation of the relationship is nothing but a mutual torture.

However, such dulling need not be definite. It is apt to turn from a temporary condition into a lasting one if the sexual partners are unable to consciously recognize their mutual hatred and if they refute their desire for other objects as improper and immoral. In that case, repression of all these impulses usually follows, with all the disastrous results which the repression of powerful impulses is bound to have for the relationship between two people.

If, on the other hand, one can meet such facts squarely, without any sex-moralistic distortion, the conflict will not take on such dimensions, and some way out of the difficulty will be found. The prerequisite is that the normal jealousy which one feels does not turn into possessive demands; further, that

one recognizes a desire for others as natural and matter-of-course. Nobody would think of blaming anybody for not wanting to wear the same dress year in, year out, or for getting tired of eating the same food all the time. Only in the sexual realm has the exclusiveness of possession attained a great emotional significance; this, because the interlacing of economic interests and sexual relations made natural jealousy expand into the right of possession. Many mature and superior people have told me that once they had fought through their inner conflict, the thought of their sexual partner's entering a temporary relationship with somebody else had lost its terror and that after that the previous impossibility of the idea of an act of "unfaithfulness" seemed ridiculous to them. Innumerable examples show that *faithfulness based on conscience* gradually undermines the relationship. On the other hand, numerous examples show clearly that an occasional relationship with another partner only helped a relationship which was on the point of taking on the form of compulsive marriage. In a permanent sexual relationship which is not economically bound there are two possible outcomes of this situation: Either, the relationship with the third person was only temporary; that proves that it could not compete with the existing one; in that case, the latter only becomes consolidated; the woman has lost the feeling of being inhibited or of being incapable of entering another relationship. Or, the new relationship becomes more intensive than the old one, providing deeper pleasure and companionship; in this case, the old relationship is dissolved.

What happens to the partner whose love may persist? Doubtless, he or she will have a hard battle. Jealousy and a feeling of sexual inferiority will fight with the understanding for the other partner's fate. He or she may try to win the partner back, or may prefer to wait passively and leave the decision to the course of events. After all, we do not give advice, we only consider the actual possibilities. In any case, the situation is not as bad as the disastrous situation which results when two people stick together for moral or other irrational reasons. The considera-

tion of the other partner which so many people show in such cases, by constantly suppressing their real desires, without ever being able to eradicate them, this consideration turns into its opposite only too easily. He who has been too considerate tends to feel that the other person owes him gratitude, tends to consider himself a victim and martyr, and to become intolerant; all of which attitudes are much uglier and a much greater danger to the relationship than a case of "unfaithfulness" ever could have been.

Unfortunately, what has been said here applies only for a small minority of people, because, in our society, the economic dependence of the woman forces sexual relationships to take on an entirely different form from that here described of two independent individuals. In addition, the question of bringing up children may nullify these sex-economic considerations. Also, the sexual education to which practically all people were subjected, and the social atmosphere, continue to make such solutions rare individual occurrences.

One specific difficulty should be mentioned here because it may have serious consequences if not understood. At a time when the sexual attraction diminishes or disappears, the man may show disturbances of potency. Usually it is a matter of insufficient erection, perhaps lack of excitement in spite of stimulation. In the continued presence of a tender relationship or of a fear of impotence, such an occurrence may precipitate a depression or even more or less lasting impotence. In trying to hide his coldness, the man will attempt sexual intercourse again and again. This may be dangerous. It should be remembered that this lack of erection, at first at any rate, is not impotence, but simply the expression of lacking desire and of a desire—usually unconscious—for another partner. (In the woman, essentially the same thing may occur, only in her it does not have the same importance; first, because the sexual act can be carried out in spite of her disturbance, and second because the woman does not feel as offended by such a disturbance as the man). If the relationship is otherwise good, a frank talk about the causes of the disturb-



ance (sensual aversion, desire for another partner) often eliminates the difficulty. And it takes patience. In otherwise good relationships, the sexual desire usually returns sooner or later. At such a point, an attempt with another partner may miscarry because of guilt feelings toward the first partner. In other cases, it helps.

In the presence of a neurotic disposition, the repression of the desire for another partner, plus that of the aversion toward the present partner, is apt to lead to neurotic illness. Very often, such an acute conflict interferes seriously with the working capacity. These people fall ill because they seek the gratification, which is denied them in reality, in phantasies, usually connected with masturbation. The outcome of such acute conflicts may vary greatly, depending on individual disposition, the character of the sexual relationship, and the moral attitudes of the individual and the sexual partner. Our prejudices in sexual morality may do untold harm here; quite commonly, the very thought of another person is felt to be improper or already an act of unfaithfulness. The fact that such conditions are a natural part of the sexual drive, that they are a matter of course and have nothing to do with morality, should be general knowledge. If it were a matter of general knowledge, the tortures and murders of husbands and wives or of sweethearts certainly would become less frequent; also, a great many precipitating causes for psychic disturbances would be eliminated, disturbances which are nothing but an inadequate way out of such situations.

Up to this point, I have discussed difficulties which arise from the permanent sexual relationship itself. Before turning to the ways in which these difficulties are complicated by the interference of economic interests, I have to mention some facts which create difficulties also in the sexual relationship which has not yet become a marriage of duty. What I mean is the *ideology of monogamy*, as it is accepted and represented especially by the woman.

For a woman, even though she be economically independent, the breaking up of a permanent sexual relationship is no simple

matter. To begin with, there is so-called *public opinion*, an institution which presumes to meddle in everybody's private affairs. True, it is less severe today with the woman who has an extra-marital relationship, but it makes any woman a prostitute who dares to have relationships with several men.

Sexual morality, pervaded by interests of possession as it is, has brought about a state of affairs in which it is considered a matter of course that the man "possesses" the woman, while the woman "gives herself." Since possessing signifies honor, while "giving oneself" has the connotation of debasing oneself, women have developed a negative attitude toward the sexual act. This attitude is constantly being fostered by authoritarian education. And, worse, since to most men the possessing of a woman is a proof of their virility rather than an experience of love, since with them, the conquest is more important than love, this attitude on the part of the women becomes tragically justified.

In addition, the girl has, from infancy on, absorbed the demand that a woman should have intercourse with only *one* man. The influences of such an education go deeper and are more powerful—being anchored by unconscious guilt feelings—than the influence of later sexual enlightenment which comes too late. One keeps meeting women who—in spite of better intellectual insight—are incapable of separating from an unloved man, and who refute any thought of it with all kinds of irrelevant arguments. The real motive, which remains unconscious, might be formulated like this: "My mother has stood her dreadful marriage all her life, so I'll have to stand it, too." In the majority of cases, this identification with the faithful, monogamous mother is the most effective inhibiting factor.

Permanent sexual relationships which do not turn into marriage rarely are of lifelong duration. The earlier such relationships are begun, the greater is the likeliness that they will be dissolved sooner than others that were started later; the greater also, as can easily be shown, the psychological and biological justification for dissolving them. Up until the age of about 30, the average individual—unless he is too much inhibited by his

economic situation—is in constant psychic development. Only at this age, interests usually begin to crystallize and to become permanent. The ideology of asceticism and of lasting monogamy, then, are strictly at variance with the process of psychic and physical development. This ideology cannot be put into execution. This leads us to the contradictions inherent in any ideology of marriage.

## 2. THE PROBLEM OF MARRIAGE

The difficulties described in the case of the permanent sexual relationship are accentuated by economic bonds and in reality made insuperable. *The permanent sexual relationship, with its biological and psychosexual foundation, thus turns into compulsive marriage.* This institution is ideologically characterized by the ecclesiastical demands that it must be a) *lifelong*, and b) *strictly monogamous*. True, society mitigates the ecclesiastical form of marriage, but it never goes to its inner contradictions, because, if it did, society would come into conflict with its own liberal concepts. From an economic point of view, it would have to uphold marriage, while from an ideological point of view it would have to draw conclusions which are not practicable. This contradictoriness is found, without exception, in all scientific and literary treatises dealing with marriage. Reduced to the briefest formula, the contradiction is this: *True, the marriages are bad, but the institution of compulsive marriage must be upheld and nurtured.* The first half of this formula is a statement of fact, the second a demand, a demand in accordance with reactionary society of which the institution of compulsive marriage is an inseparable part.

Due to this double loyalty—facts on the one hand, reactionary ideology on the other hand—writers arrive at the most peculiar and absurd arguments in favor of the preservation of compulsive marriage.

Thus, for example, they attempt to prove that marriage and monogamy are “natural” phenomena, that is, that they are biologically determined. They search assiduously among all the

animal species with an undoubtedly irregular sex life, pick out the storks and pigeons and find that they live—sometimes!—in monogamy; from this follows, they say, that monogamy is “natural.” Peculiar how all of a sudden, the human is no longer a superior being, *not* to be compared with animals, when it comes to support the ideology of monogamous marriage by such a comparison. On the other hand, when the marriage problem is being discussed from the point of view of *biology*, then the fact is overlooked that promiscuity is the rule in animals; then, all of a sudden, man is different from the animals and thus will have to attain the “highest plane” of sexual activity, monogamous marriage. Then, man is a “superior being” with an “inborn morality,” and sex-economy is fought because it has proved beyond doubt that there is no such thing as an inborn morality. But if morality is not inborn, it must be acquired by education. Education by whom? By society and its ideology factory, the authoritarian family based on compulsive monogamy. This shows clearly enough that the family is not a natural phenomenon, but a social institution.

But reactionary argumentation is long-lived. When one has to admit that marriage is neither a natural nor a supernatural but a social institution, one begins to try to prove that people have always lived in monogamy, and denies any development and change of sexual forms. One even falsifies ethnology as did Westermarck, for example, and arrives at conclusions like the following: If people always have lived in lifelong monogamy, then one must conclude that this institution is necessary for the existence of human society, of the state, culture and civilization. One overlooks history which shows that polygamous and promiscuous sex life has always played a role. Instead, one replaces the point of view of development by that of morality. One discovers the development of sexuality to “higher planes,” that the primitives live in bestial immorality, and that we can pride ourselves in having overcome such “anarchic” conditions in sex life. One overlooks the fact that man is distinguished from the animal not by a lesser sexuality but by a more intensive one (readiness for

sexual activity at all times). Certainly, as far as sexuality is concerned, the slogan of man being "higher than the animal" is mistaken. If, however, one adheres to such moralistic views, one is incapable of seeing the facts, such facts, for example, as that "savages" show a sex-economy which is far superior to ours.<sup>2</sup> Then also, one has no possibility of examining sexual forms—which change according to place and time—as to their economic and social basis. Instead, one gets more and more entangled in moralistic evaluation instead of fact-finding, and in endless, fruitless discussions. One attempts to justify—morally, metaphysically or biologically—social phenomena which long since were doomed; and all this takes place under the guise of allegedly objective science, a science which seems all the more awe-inspiring to the Babbitts the more moralistically prejudiced it behaves.

If, on the other hand, one sticks strictly to the facts, two questions present themselves:

1. What is the social function of marriage?
2. What is the inherent contradiction in marriage?

*a) The social function of marriage.*

The social function of the institution of marriage is threefold: economic, political and social. It is identical with that of the authoritarian family.

*Economic:* Just as marriage, in human history, began to develop with the private ownership of the social means of production, so it continues to have its reason for existence in this economic basis.<sup>3</sup> That is, as long as these economic conditions continue to

<sup>2</sup> Cf., especially, Malinowski, *THE SEXUAL LIFE OF SAVAGES*, and Reich, *DER EINBRUCH DER SEXUALMORAL*.

<sup>3</sup> *Addition, 1944:* This formulation, though correct, is incomplete. In the Soviet Union, there is no private ownership of the social means of production, but state ownership. Nevertheless, compulsive marriage has been reintroduced. The above formulation, then, has to be supplemented as follows:

a) The authoritarian compulsive family has its historical basis in the private ownership of the social means of production and is maintained by state authority even where the private ownership of the social means of production has been abolished.

b) The authoritarian compulsive family is anchored in the authoritarian, sex-negative human structure.

exist, marriage is a social necessity. The objection that classes without such an economic interest live in the same form of sex life is erroneous, for the ruling ideologies are those of the ruling class; the form of marriage is based not only on economic factors, but also on the ideological moral atmosphere and on human structure. This is why most people are unconscious of the real basis of marriage; they always think about it in terms of ideological rationalizations. However, when material reasons demand it, society will change the ideology. After the Thirty Years' War, the population of Middle Europe had dwindled considerably. Then, on February 14, 1650, the District Council of Nürnberg issued a decree which eliminated the demand for monogamy: "Whereas the needs of the Holy Roman Empire make it necessary to replace again the manhood which during this Thirty Years' War has been decimated by the sword, sickness and hunger . . . every male, for the next ten years, shall, *therefore be allowed to marry two women*" (quoted from Fuchs, *SITTENGESCHICHTE*). And scientists talk of "natural, biological" monogamy.

*Political.* Monogamous lifelong marriage is the nucleus of the authoritarian family; this, in turn, as we have shown, is the ideological training ground for every member of authoritarian society. In this lies the political significance and importance of marriage.

*Social.* The economic dependence of the woman and the children is a chief characteristic of patriarchal society. Secondarily, marriage thus becomes an economic and moral (in the sense of patriarchal interests) protection for women and children. *Consequently, patriarchal and authoritarian society must of necessity uphold marriage.* It is not a question here whether marriage is good or bad, whether it is socially justified and necessary. One cannot want to abolish marriage in a society in which marriage is economically rooted. One can only introduce minor "reforms," such as substituting the principle of incompatibility for that of guilt as a reason for divorce; no such reforms change the fundamentals in the least.

Such reforms result from contradictions in the marriage situation which arise not for economic but for sex-economic reasons. They are mostly of the character of tragicomic jokes, as portrayed in the following newspaper item (*Pester Lloyd*, January 25, 1929):

*Bridge as school subject.* From Cleveland in America comes a surprising report. The city schools there have decided to make bridge an obligatory subject. The reason given for this peculiar innovation is that the American home seems doomed because there is so much less bridge playing. Numerous marriages have gone on the rocks because the husbands and wives, instead of playing bridge with each other or in good company, went out by themselves. By teaching the children bridge, it is hoped that not only will they themselves be trained for a solid marital life, but also will exert a good influence on their parents, most of whom live in shattered marriages.

One might say that most remarks about marriage which one hears are made in such a jocular vein; it is easy to see what serious facts are covered up by such superficial jocularity. That marriages disintegrate is nothing new. Nevertheless, let us look at a few figures. First, the number of marriages and divorces in Vienna between 1915 and 1925 (according to Walter Schiff):

Year	Marriages	Divorces
1915 .....	13,954	617
1916 .....	12,855	656
1917 .....	12,406	659
1918 .....	17,123	1078
1919 .....	26,182	2460
1920 .....	31,164	3145
1921 .....	29,274	3300
1922 .....	26,568	3113
1923 .....	19,827	3371
1924 .....	17,410	3437
1925 .....	16,288	3241

One sees that the number of marriages—except for the years immediately after the war—has increased only slightly, while the number of divorces increased steadily, 500% in 10 years. While the ratio of marriages to divorces was about 20:1 in 1915, it was 5:1 in 1925.

In an article in the *Pesti Naplo* of November 18, 1928, we find the following:

While it is true that the number of marriages has increased, the number of divorces has increased much more rapidly. Between 1878 and 1927 the number of marriages has increased *four* times, while the number of divorces has increased *eighty* (80) times. In 1926 the ratio was even as high as 1:100.

This article reported further that the majority of these divorces had taken place 5 or 6 years after marriage. In 1927, in 1,498 out of 1,645 cases, the plea was "desertion"; only in two cases, the reason for the divorce was adultery.

Since 1931, the number of marriages in Europe—with the exception of Czechoslovakia—has shown an increase, particularly in Germany and Italy. This reflects the increased pressure on the part of the political reaction; in Germany, 366,178 marriage loans were extended within three years for the advancement of the family ideology. Otherwise, such an increase means little if anything. It does not say anything about any change in sexual living. The basic contradiction remains the same.

In Soviet Russia, where the institution of marriage was practically abolished (the registration of a sexual relationship was not obligatory), statistics show the following: In Moscow, the number of registrations increased, between 1926 and 1929, from 24,899 to 26,211; during the same period, the separations increased from 11,879 to 19,421. In Leningrad, there were 20,913 registrations in 1926, 24,369 in 1927. During the same time, separations increased from 5,536 to 16,008.

Figures for the U.S.A. by Lindsey are as follows: In 1922, the number of divorces and desertions in Denver was greater than that of marriages. Compared with 1921, there was a decrease in marriages of 618, and an increase of divorces of 45. While the number of marriages was 4,002 in 1920, it was 3,008 in 1922. In Chicago, the number of divorces was exactly one third of the number of marriages.

According to the *United Press*, there were in Atlanta in 1924



1,845 divorces to 3,350 marriages (over  $\frac{1}{2}$ ); in Los Angeles 7,882 to 16,605 (almost  $\frac{1}{2}$ ); in Kansas City 2,400 to 4,821 (almost  $\frac{1}{2}$ ); in Ohio 11,885 to 53,300 (about  $\frac{1}{5}$ ); in Denver 1,500 to 3,000 ( $\frac{1}{2}$ ); and in Cleveland 5,256 to 16,132 ( $\frac{1}{2}$ ). Lindsey comments as follows:

Marriage, as we have it now, is plain Hell for most persons who get into it. That's flat. I defy anybody to watch the procession of wrecked lives, unhappy men and women and miserable, homeless neglected children who pass through my court, and come to any other conclusion.

(“REVOLT,” p. 174)

In Chicago it is reported that there were 39,000 marriage licenses issued in 1922 as compared with 13,000 divorce decrees actually signed. If 13,000 divorce decrees were actually signed, how many couples do you suppose there were who *wished* they could get somebody to sign a divorce decree for them, but who never acted on their wish? For divorce is a troublesome, expensive, embarrassing business, and persons who wish for it resort to the courts only when at the extreme limit of their endurance. If there were 39,000 marriages in Chicago in the year of grace 1922, it is absurdly conservative to say that fully 26,000 would have gotten divorces if they could, in addition to the 13,000 who did. I base this belief on the proportion of married couples who come under my own observation, coming as they do confidentially for advice and consolation, and who never go after the divorce they wish for. I believe their number is many, many times larger than the number of those who go to court with their problems.

(“REVOLT,” p. 212)

There is no escaping the conclusion, if such facts be compared with the statistics of former years, that divorces and separations are steadily increasing, and that if this continues, as it probably will for some time to come, there will be as many divorce cases filed in some parts of the country as there are marriage licenses granted . . .

There are tens of thousands of cases where the flat failure of the individual marriage is recorded in our courts, not as “divorce” or

"legal separation" but as failure to provide, non-support, desertion, and the like. *Materially and psychologically there is no reason why these should not be classed as divorces—for they would be just that if the parties to such marriages could have their way*, and were not held together by circumstance, children, and their legal obligations. The general name which would cover all such cases, including divorces, separations, and all others are Marriages That Have Failed. Under that title it would be conservative to say that there are as many "divorces" annually as there are marriage licenses granted.

("REVOLT," p. 213f.)

Here is an embarrassing talk with an American girl:

For instance, Mary, this girl of whom I have been telling, avoided marriage because she objected to entering on a contract so nearly irrevocable and so hard to break away from . . . What she demanded was a kind of marriage that would leave her a free agent; but she couldn't have it. Therefore she rejected the whole institution, even while admitting that, with certain amendments, she was for it, and could see many advantages in it.

It may be contended that it was Mary's duty, as a law-abiding member of Society, to conform to the institution of marriage as we have it, and take her chance with it; and that if she could not bring herself to that she must remain celibate and deny her sex life the normal expression it craved.

To that Mary gives answer, rightly or wrongly, that she will not sacrifice herself to any such fetish of conformity; that she will not submit to having to make a choice between two such demands, both of which she considers monstrous and unreasonable.

Instead, she raises a flag of defiance, and says, "No, I and my generation will find a third way out. Whether you like it or not we will make among ourselves a marriage pact of our own, one that will meet our needs. We believe we have a natural right to companionship and an intimacy which we instinctively crave; we have a knowledge of contraception which precludes the likelihood that unwanted babies will complicate the situation; we don't admit that such a course on our part imperils the safety of human society; and we believe that this effort to replace tradition with what we think is common sense will do good rather than harm."—In substance that is the way she put it.

Now what am I, a man occupying a responsible judicial position, to say to a challenge like that? On the one hand I can't commend Mary's conduct without disregarding the grave practical difficulties and social dangers which may be involved in any headlong application of her theories—the kind of application she herself is making of them, for instance. On the other hand, I cannot, with sincerity or honesty, say to Mary or anybody else that I think the institution of marriage *as we have it* capable of guaranteeing happiness to persons who enter it. I cannot escape admitting that if marriage is ever to merit the unqualified support of society it must be able to show results reasonably commensurate with its claims; and that for whatever unhappiness it produces by reason of its present rigid code it must be held answerable. Nor can I pass in silence over the fact that marriage is ordained for the welfare and happiness of mankind, and that mankind was not made for it; that marriage is not an end but a means; that when a shoe does not fit, it is the shoe rather than the foot that must be altered. As to the demand for celibacy as an alternative to a possibly disastrous marriage, why waste one's breath making demands which people would never meet and which would do violence to a necessary instinct if they did meet it?

("REVOLT," p. 138ff.)

And what are Lindsey's conclusions from his own findings and the painful talk with Mary?

And yet this is by no means to say that marriage is a failure and should go into the discard to make way for Free Love or any other social Ism. However imperfect the institution may be *we can't do without it*. It must be preserved by means of sane and cautious alterations in its code, to the end that it may create in people's lives the kind of happiness it should, under right conditions, be capable of creating. I believe enormously in the beneficent possibilities of marriage, but I can't ignore the fact that we are not permitting it to fulfil those possibilities. I hope I make myself clear.

("REVOLT," p. 140)

As we see, even such an extraordinary man as Lindsey makes the jump from the finding that marriage is disintegrating and that it is at variance with sex-economy, into reactionary ethics

which, as we know, are only a reflection of the economic necessities of the ruling system. That the disintegration of marriages is so rapid and obvious in America is due to the fact that there, capitalism has made the farthest advance and consequently produces the sharpest contradictions in the field of sex-economy: strict puritanism on the one hand, collapse of reactionary morality on the other.

Lindsey is convinced that marriage must be preserved, because of "the kind of happiness it should, under right conditions, be capable of creating." The question is not, however, whether marriage has possibilities of happiness. The question is, rather, whether it fulfils these possibilities; not whether it possibly may make people happy, but whether it does. And if it does not, we have to examine the causes; if it collapses, we have to investigate the material and sex-economic reasons for such collapse.

Hoffinger, during the 19th century, came to the following conclusion:

In spite of conscientious and intensive search for the number of happy marriages, he had to recognize happy marriages to be the very rare exceptions which confirmed the rule.

(Quoted from Bloch, *DAS SEXUALLEBEN UNSERER ZEIT*)

Gross-Hoffinger found:

1. About half of the marriages are absolutely unhappy.
2. Far more than half of these are obviously demoralized.
3. The morality of the remainder certainly does not include marital faithfulness.

4. In 15 per cent of all marriages the partners are engaged in prostitution and pandering.

5. The number of orthodox marriages which are above any and all suspicion of unfaithfulness is—in the eyes of any reasonable person who knows nature and the impetuosity of its demands—zero.

(Bloch, *SEXUALLEBEN*)

Bloch examined 100 marriages and found the following:

Definitely unhappy	48
Indifference	36
Undoubtedly happy	15
Virtuous	1

Among these 100 marriages, Bloch found 14 "intentionally immoral"; 51 "frivolous and slovenly"; 2 "completely unsuspect." Note the moralistic terms. I checked up on these cases and found that out of the marriages termed happy, 3 were at an advanced age; in 13 there was unfaithfulness of one or both; 3 were characterized as "phlegmatic," i.e., sexually undemanding (impotent or frigid); 2 were apparently happy. If, in 13 of 15 marriages which are considered "undoubtedly happy," the partners are unfaithful, that shows that in the long run a marriage can be happy only if its most important ideological demand, marital faithfulness, is sacrificed, or if the partners have no sexual demands at all.

A statistical study of my own, concerning 93 marriages with which I was well acquainted, showed the following:

Unhappy or definitely unfaithful	66
Spouses resigned or ill	18
Questionable (outwardly quiet)	6
Happy	3

Of the three happy marriages, none was older than 3 years. The study was made in 1925. Since then, one of the marriages has ended in divorce, one collapsed inwardly when the man came to analysis, though there has as yet been no divorce, the third continues at the time of this writing (1929).

In a course for physicians, Lebedeva, in Moscow, gave some interesting figures with regard to the duration of sexual relationships. These were based on the registered marriages which are, for all practical purposes, pure permanent sexual relationships. Of these registered relationships 19% lasted up to one year; 37% three to four years; 26% four to nine years; 12% ten to nineteen years.

These figures show that four years is the average length for the sexual basis of a relationship. How is conservative sex reform going to deal with this fact?

Here I would like to add a few remarks about those marriages that are called good and "serene." "Serene" simply means that the conflicts are not apparent on the surface. Many marriages are called "happy" in which quiet resignation has covered up all conflicts. If a partner in such a marriage comes to analysis, one is again and again astounded by the amount of unconscious and suppressed hatred which accumulated in the course of the marriage and which—without ever having been quite conscious—finally led to a psychic disturbance. It would be a mistake to ascribe this hatred exclusively to infantile experiences. It was found that the transference of the hatred from a person hated in infancy to the spouse did not take place until the marriage situation produced conflicts which then reactivated infantile difficulties. Experience shows that during an analysis such marriages collapse if one analyzes without regard for the compulsive morality of marriage; that is, if one does not, consciously or unconsciously, evade subjects which might endanger the existing marriage. Experience shows further that marriages which had to stand the pressure of an analysis can continue only if the patient regains his sexual motility and is determined not to be blindly obedient to the strict rules of marital morality. Such obedience always turns out to be anchored in neurotic repressions.

The *analysis of married people*, furthermore, reveals the following unequivocal facts:

1. There is no woman who does not have the so-called "prostitution phantasies." Only rarely is the content of these phantasies that of prostituting themselves. As a rule, it is the wish to have intercourse with more than one man, the wish not to have her sexual experience limited to *one* man. In our society, understandably enough, such a wish easily becomes associated with the idea of prostitution. Character-analytic experience destroys every vestige of the belief in a monogamous constitution of women. Many psychoanalysts hold these "prostitution phantasies" to be neurotic

and feel they must free the women from them. With such a judgment, one has relinquished the amoral attitude necessary for rational therapy and begins to analyze only in the interest of a pathogenic morality. The duty of the physician, however, is the consideration of the patient's health, that is, his sexual economy, and not morality. If one finds that there is a contradiction between the patient's libidinal demands and social morality, then it is a mistake to do away with these demands as "infantile," as machinations of the "pleasure principle" and to invoke the necessity of a "reality principle," of "adjustment to reality," or of "resignation." First one has to find out whether the sexual demands are really infantile or not, and whether the demands of reality are acceptable from the point of view of health. A woman who satisfies her sexual demands with more than one man is not necessarily infantile; she just does not fit the ideological pattern of our society. She is not sick, but is apt to fall ill if she adjusts more to conventional morality than her sexual demands can stand. More attention should be paid to the fact that the "good" wives, those "adjusted to reality," that is, those who have accepted the burden of marriage seemingly without conflict, because they are sexually inhibited, present all the signs of a neurosis. But this fact is overlooked because they are "adjusted to reality."

2. Analysis, if it includes the social existence, shows us the motives of the ideology of monogamy. The most important of these are: intense identification with the parents who represented monogamy at least to the outside, particularly identification of the daughter with the monogamous mother. But also the opposite, the reaction to the strict monogamy of the mother: *neurotic polygamy*. A further reason for a monogamous ideology lies in the guilt feelings toward the partner, because of the suppressed hatred against the partner who prevents sexual freedom. The most important motivation of the monogamous attitude, however, lies in the infantile sexual prohibitions, the fear of sexual activities acquired in childhood. *The monogamous ideology in the individual, then, is shown to be a mechanism of powerful protection against his own sexual desires, desires which*

*know nothing of the antithesis monogamy—polygamy, but know only gratification.* The incestuous fixation to the parent of the other sex plays an important role here; if this fixation is destroyed, a great part of the monogamous ideology collapses. In the woman, economic dependence is an important motivation of the monogamous tendencies. Often, a strict moral attitude of monogamy loosens up even without analytic work when a woman achieves economic independence.

3. The husband's demand for his wife's fidelity also has its individual motives. The economic basis of monogamy does not seem to have an immediate psychic representation. The motives are, in the first place, fear of a competitor, particularly one with a superior potency, and the narcissistic fear of the social stigma of being a "cuckold." A woman, when deceived, is not despised, but pitied. This is because to the woman, economically dependent as she is, the husband's infidelity presents a real danger. If, on the other hand, the woman is unfaithful, this proves, in public opinion, that the man was not able to enforce his rights, maybe that he was not man enough in the purely sexual sense to hold his wife. For this reason, a wife usually tolerates the husband's infidelity better than the husband the wife's. If the economic interests influenced ideology directly, the opposite would be the case. However, there are, between the economic basis of moral concepts and those concepts themselves, all kinds of intermediary links, such as the vanity of the husband, so that in the end the social significance of marriage remains intact: the man is allowed to be unfaithful, the woman is not.

*b) The inherent contradiction in the institution of marriage.*

The contradiction in the institution of marriage is based on the conflict between sexual and economic interests. The demands of the economic interests are made with great consistency and emphasis. For a sexually intact individual it is sex-economically impossible to submit to the conditions of marital morality, only *one* partner, and that one *for life*. The very first prerequisite of marriage, therefore, is a far-reaching suppression of the sexual



needs, particularly in the woman. Therefore, morality demands—more in the case of the woman than that of the man—premarital chastity. Not sexuality, they say, but children are the essence of marriage (which is correct for the economic aspect of marriage, but not for the permanent sexual relationship). Married people are not supposed to make the sexual acquaintance of anybody else during marriage.

No doubt, these demands are necessary for the preservation of the marriage. *But it is these very same demands which undermine marriage*, which doom it to ruin at its very beginning. The demand for a lifelong sexual relationship creates of necessity a revolt against the compulsion; whether this revolt is conscious or unconscious, it will be all the more intense the more lively and active the sexual needs. The woman has lived in sexual abstinence up to the marriage; in order to be able to maintain her abstinence, she had to repress her genital demands. Now, when she gets married, her genitality is no longer at her disposal; she remains frigid. As soon as the charm of novelty has worn off, she can neither excite nor satisfy her husband. The healthier the husband, the sooner will he withdraw his interest and will seek another woman who can give him more, and the first rift is there. Though the man, according to social mores, has the privilege of “sowing his wild oats,” he is, nevertheless, supposed not to go too far in his “escapades.” He, too, when he gets married, must repress a good deal of his genital interests. Though this is good for the preservation of the marriage, it is bad for the sexual relationship, because it results in disturbances of potency. If the woman is capable of developing her genitality and begins to develop it, she is soon disappointed by the husband’s sexual inadequacy. She will seek another partner or will suffer from sexual stasis and develop a neurosis. *In either case the marriage has been undermined by the very thing which was to safeguard its existence: the sex-suppressive education for marriage.*

There is the further fact that the increasing economic independence of the woman helps her to overcome her sexual inhibitions; she is less tied to the house and the children and makes

the acquaintance of other men; the inclusion in the economic process sets her thinking about things which previously were not within her sphere of thinking.

Marriages could be good, at least for a certain period of time, if there were sexual harmony and gratification. This would, however, presuppose a sex-affirmative education, premarital sexual experience, and emancipation from conventional morality. *But the very thing that might make for a good marriage means at the same time its doom.* For once sexuality is affirmed, once moralism is overcome, there is no longer any inner argument against intercourse with other partners except for a period of time, during which *faithfulness based on gratification* exists (but not for a lifetime). The ideology of marriage collapses and with it the marriage. It is no longer marriage, but a permanent sexual relationship. Such a relationship, because of the absence of suppression of genital desires, is more apt to prove happy than strictly monogamous marriage. In many cases, the cure for an unhappy marriage—moralists and authoritarian law notwithstanding—is marital infidelity.

Gruber writes:

Certainly there will be in every marriage moments, or periods, of intense dissatisfaction, when being chained to each other will become a heavy burden. Such unfortunate disturbances will be most easily overcome by those who entered matrimony chaste and who have remained faithful in marriage (HYGIENE, p. 148).

Gruber is right: the more abstinent people are before marriage, the more faithful will they be in marriage. But this kind of faithfulness is due only to the atrophy of sexuality caused by premarital abstinence.

*The fruitlessness of conservative marriage reform, then, is explained by the contradiction between the marriage ideology—which causes marital misery and the need for reform—and the fact that the very form of marriage which is supposed to be reformed is a specific part of the social order and is economically anchored in it.* We have shown that, basically, the prevailing

sexual misery is due to the conflict between natural sexual needs on the one hand and the ideology of extramarital abstinence and lifelong monogamous marriage on the other hand.

The sex reformer finds that the majority of all marriages are unhappy because there is incomplete sexual satisfaction, because the men are clumsy and the women frigid. Thus, a sex reformer like Van de Velde proposes the erotization of marriage; he teaches the husbands sexual techniques and expects from this an improvement of the relationships. The basic idea is correct; a marriage with a satisfactory erotic basis is, indeed, better than the erotically unsatisfactory one. But he overlooks all prerequisites of an erotization of a sexual relationship. The most important of these would be a general affirmation of sexuality, and premarital sexual experience on the part of the woman. Sexual education as it is, however, is determined by the goals: chastity of the girls, and compulsive faithfulness of the wife. Both of these goals make necessary a far-reaching if not complete sexual repression on the part of the girl. That woman who is sexually undemanding, dependent, sex-negating or at best sex-tolerating, is the most faithful wife; in terms of conservative morality, the best wife. A sex-affirmative sexual education would make the woman more independent; thus, it would be inherently dangerous to marriage. *A sex-negative sexual education is absolutely logical from the point of view of lifelong monogamous marriage. Conversely, the demand for erotization of marriage contradicts the ideology of marriage.*

Thus, Professor Häberlin of Basel writes in his book, *DIE EHE*, that sexual love is the true motive for marriage; he goes on to say that "while, without sexual love a full marriage is impossible, nevertheless, it constitutes, in marriage, the dangerous and incalculable element, and by its very presence, makes marital living an eternally problematic thing." As a consistent reactionary scientist he then arrives at the conclusion: "Marriage must be a companionship for life *in spite of* the sexual love that goes with it." In other words: Reactionary society has an economic interest

in the institution of lifelong monogamous marriage and cannot take sexual interests into account.

For this reason, any alleviation of the divorce laws within authoritarian society is practically meaningless as far as the masses are concerned. The divorce law means nothing but that society, in principle, allows divorce. But is it also ready to create those economic conditions which make it possible for the woman actually to effect it? One of the prerequisites would be that the rationalization of production would lead to shorter hours and better wages instead of leading to unemployment. Owing to the economic dependence of the woman on the man and her lesser gratification in the processes of production, marriage is a protective institution for her, but at the same time she is exploited in it. For, she is not only the sexual object of the man and the provider of children for the state, but her unpaid work in the household indirectly increases the profit of the employer. For the man can work at the usual low wages only on the condition that in the home so and so much work is done without pay. If the employer were responsible for the running of his workers' homes, he either would have to pay a housekeeper for them or would have to pay them wages which would allow the workers to hire one. This work, however, is done by the housewife, without remuneration. If the wife is also employed, she has to work overtime, without pay, if she wants to keep the home in order; if she does not do that, the household disintegrates more or less, and the marriage ceases to be a conventional marriage.

In addition to these economic difficulties there is the fact that the woman, as a result of conventional sex education, is adapted only to marital sex life, with all its sexual misery, compulsion and emptiness, but also with its external calm and its settled routine which saves the average woman the necessity of thinking about her sexuality and the struggles of an extramarital life. To be conscious of her sexuality might possibly save her from a neurosis but not from the sexual suffering inflicted by the conventional atmosphere.

The contradictions in the institution of marriage are reflected

in the contradictions of marriage reforms. The reform of marriage by erotization (as proposed by Van de Velde) is in itself a contradiction. Such proposals as Lindsey's "Companionate Marriage" are compromises. Instead of finding out the reasons for the disintegration, one attempts to patch up what is disintegrating, guided by the principle, "Marriage is the best sex reform." Lindsey's writings show clearly the jump from fact-finding to conventional moralistic evaluation. He objects to a trial marriage for moral reasons, at the same time championing the system of companionate marriage, that is, a "legally sanctioned" relation with legally sanctioned birth control. If one looks for the reason for this legal sanction, one finds none save the concept that sexual relations *should* be legally sanctioned. The only difference, then, between companionate marriage and conventional marriage would lie in birth control and the fact that it could be dissolved without further difficulty. True, this proposal is the most far-reaching that has been made in conservative society. Yet, one has to realize clearly that it is bound by society, that, in it, the economic interests of woman and child must of necessity be placed before the requirements of sex-economy; therefore, it cannot contribute anything to the solution of the problem of marriage.

The facts are these: *The marriage conflict cannot be solved within the present social order*, for the following reasons. On the one hand, the sexual urge can no longer be confined in the sexual form into which it has been forced; the result is *disintegration of the morality of marriage*. On the other hand, the economic condition of the woman and children make marriage necessary; the result is *continued advocacy of the existing sex form, compulsive marriage*. This conflict is only the continuation of another one on a different level. This other conflict consists in the fact that within the framework of authoritarian society work-democratic modes of production develop, and marriage morality changes to the same extent to which economic independence of the woman and collectivization of working youth as well as the sexual conflict itself give rise to sexual crises. *Compulsive marriage is part and parcel*

*of the authoritarian economic system and is therefore maintained in spite of all its critical conflicts.* Its disintegration is only a symptom of the precariousness of the authoritarian way of living in general. Compulsive marriage disintegrates automatically with the disintegration of its economic basis. This is what happened in the Soviet Union.

The rapid and complete disintegration of compulsive marriage after the revolution showed clearly how lacking it is in a sex-economic foundation. The latent marriage crisis always manifests itself in the form of the disintegration of marriage in times of social crises. "A lowering of morals in times of crisis," many will say. But let us see the facts in their social context instead of looking at them moralistically. The disintegration of authoritarian morality merely meant that the social revolution also led to a sexual revolution.

As long as there is a norm for sex life in the sense of the ideology of monogamy, sexual life will be externally orderly, internally chaotic and sex-uneconomic. Plainly, the advocates of the marriage ideology do not let themselves be convinced by the visible effects of the norm which they advocate: the general degradation of love life, the prevailing marital misery, the sexual misery of adolescents, sexual perversions and sexual crimes. That being so, they will not be impressed by the further argument that natural needs do not need the tutelage of society as long as society does nothing to disturb their gratification. The meaning of human socialization is the facilitation of the gratification of hunger and sexual needs. Patriarchal society makes the former difficult and the latter almost impossible for most people.

Will the elimination of the social standardization of sexual life again bring to power the natural, sex-economic regulation? It is not for us to express hope or fear; we can only study the question of whether the development of society tends in the direction of improving the natural conditions of material as well as sexual economy. One thing is certain: A generally recognized scientific and rational view of life will do away with all idols; the health and happiness of millions of people will no longer be

sacrificed in the interest of an abstract idea of culture, an "objective spirit" or a metaphysical "morality." No longer will so-called socialists—as they are doing today—stoop to support a ruinous moralistic regulation of human life with their "scientific statements."

It was supposedly the task of the social revolution to bring about the scientific approach to life. In Russia, the social revolution took place in 1917. Let us see how it approached the sexual problem, where it succeeded and where it failed.

**PART TWO**

**THE STRUGGLE FOR THE "NEW LIFE" IN THE  
SOVIET UNION**



#### A NECESSARY PREAMBLE

In June, 1934, the law punishing homosexuality was reintroduced in the Soviet Union,<sup>1</sup> and rumors about the persecution of homosexuals became increasingly frequent. In their fight against the reactionary homosexuality law, Austrian and German sex reformers had always pointed to the progressive S.U. which had abolished the punishment of homosexuality.

Similarly, abortion became more and more difficult for women with their first or second pregnancy, and abortion in general was being more and more fought. The German birth control movement had derived strong support from the Soviet attitude toward birth control in its fight against the political reaction. Now, the opponents of liberal legislation regarding birth control and abortion point triumphantly to the fact that the S.U. also has abandoned its previous attitude.

In Germany, the *Verlag für Sexualpolitik*, with the collaboration of various youth organizations, the publishing house of the Youth International and with the approval of the Youth Executive Committee, published my book, *DER SEXUELLE KAMPF DER JUGEND*, with a view to developing progressive concepts and practice in the sexological field. We kept pointing to the liberty which the S.U. gave youth in sexual matters. Then, in 1932, the Communist Party of Germany prohibited the distribution of the book; a year later the Nazis put it on the index. We hear now that in the S.U. youth has a difficult stand against the old physicians and many high state functionaries who, increasingly, return to the old ideology of asceticism. Thus, we can no longer point to the sexual freedom of S.U. youth, and there is confusion among European youth who do not understand this.

We hear and read that in the S.U. the compulsive family is

---

<sup>1</sup> From here on abbreviated as "S.U."

again being cherished and supported. The regulation of marriage as set down in 1918 is being more or less abolished. In our fight against the reactionary marriage laws, we had always pointed to the Soviet laws. The revolution had confirmed Marx's statement that the social revolution "puts an end to marriage." Now, reactionary politics triumph: "You see, your theories are nonsense. Even the S.U. relinquishes the false doctrine of the destruction of the family. The family is and remains the basis of society and of the state."

We hear that the responsibility for the education of the children is again turned over to the parents. In our pedagogical and cultural work we used to point to the fact that in the S.U. the parents were deprived of their power over the children and that society as a whole took over the task of caring for their education. The collectivization of education seemed a fundamental process in a Socialist society. Every progressive worker, every clear-thinking mother realized and affirmed this tendency in Sovietism. We fought the possessive tendencies and the misuse of power on the part of the mothers and pointed out to them that the children were not being "taken away" from them but that the education of the children by society relieved them of burdens and cares. This they understood. Now the political reaction can point out: "You see, even in the S.U. they have given up this nonsense and are reinstating the natural, God-given power of the parents over the children."

We hear that the Dalton plan has long since been given up in Soviet schools, and that the methods of teaching are becoming more and more authoritarian. In our fight for self-government of the children and for the elimination of the authoritarian form of the schools, we can no longer point to the S.U.

In our fight for a rational sex education of children and adolescents we kept pointing to the successes of the S.U. However, all we have heard for some years is that the ascetic ideology takes on increasingly severe forms.

All in all, then, we find *an inhibition of the Soviet sexual*

*revolution; more than that, a regression to an authoritarian moralistic regulation of sex life.*

We hear from many sides that the sexual reaction is increasingly gaining the upperhand in the S.U., that the revolutionary circles are at a loss to understand this and, consequently, are helpless in the face of the increasing reactionary measures. This confusion, in the S.U. as well as outside of it, raises important questions. What has happened? Why does the sexual reaction gain the upperhand? What causes the failure of the sexual revolution? What is to be done? These questions agitate the mind of every progressive sexologist today.

The argument that the political reaction could interfere with an open treatment of these questions is erroneous.

First, the political reaction never could take the standpoint of revolutionary sex politics *against* the present-day measures of the S.U. On the contrary: it triumphs over these measures.

Secondly, the clarification of this question within the German and American workers' movement is more important than considerations of prestige. Confusion is harmful. In France, *Humanité* has already demanded the preservation of the "race" and of the "French family." The recent Soviet measures are generally known and cannot be denied.

Third, there is still a possibility of coming to the aid of the defenders of the Soviet sexual revolution. Soon it may be too late.

And last, the fighters for the social revolution have nothing to hide from the masses. Tactical considerations in such questions and in such times are only a hindrance; very often, they are nothing but the expression of lack of strength to overcome difficulties with correct active measures.

The regression in the sexual field in the S.U. is part of more general problems of revolutionary cultural development. We hear that in other respects also, tendencies to social self-government give way to authoritarian rule. Only, the regression is most outspoken in the sexual field and can be more clearly comprehended here than in other fields. Not without reason. *The sexual*

*process of a society has always been the central point of its cultural process.* This is seen as clearly in the family politics of fascism as in the transition from matriarchy to patriarchy in primitive society. It cannot be any different in the transition to a self-governing society. In Russia also, the economic revolution, in the first few years, went hand in hand with a sexual revolution. This sexual revolution was the objective expression of a cultural revolution. Without understanding the sexual process of the S.U., its cultural process cannot be understood.

It is catastrophic when leaders of a revolutionary movement try to defend reactionary concepts by calling sexually progressive people "bourgeois." The regression to Tolstoy, Wagner, escapist movie films and all kinds of trash is only an expression of the fact that the breakthrough in the forward direction did not succeed. The connections between the inhibition of the sexual revolution and the cultural regression can only be hinted at here. It may be possible before long to obtain the material necessary for a clarification of the general problem of culture. However, it will be more useful to start out by discussing its nucleus instead of discussing the general problem of culture without a knowledge of its basis—human structure.

## CHAPTER VIII

### THE "ABOLITION OF THE FAMILY"

The sexual revolution in the S.U. started with the dissolution of the family. The family disintegrated radically, in all strata of the population; sooner here, later there. This process was painful and chaotic; it caused terror and confusion. It provided an objective proof of the correctness of the sex-economic theory of the nature and the function of the family: the patriarchal family is the structural and ideological place of reproduction of every social order based on authoritarian principles. The abolition of the latter automatically undermined the institution of the family.

This disintegration of the family in the social revolution was due to the fact that the sexual needs broke the chains of the economic and authoritarian family bonds. It represented a *separation of economy and sexuality*. In patriarchy, the sexual needs were in the service and thus under the pressure of the economic interests of a minority; in primitive work-democratic matriarchy, economy was in the service of the satisfaction of the needs—including the *sexual* needs—of society as a whole; the unequivocal tendency of the social revolution was to place economy again at the service of the satisfaction of the needs of all who do productive work. This reversal of the relation between needs and economy is one of the essential points of the social revolution. Only from the point of view of this general process can the disintegration of the family be understood. This process would take place rapidly, thoroughly and easily were it a matter only of the burden of the economic family bonds and the strength of the sexual needs thus held down. The problem is not, Why does the family disintegrate? The reasons for this are obvious. The question which is much more difficult to answer is, Why is this

process so much more painful than any other effect of the revolution? The expropriation of the social means of production hurts only their owners, not the masses, the bearers of the revolution. But the disintegration of the family hits just those who are supposed to execute the economic revolution, the workers, employees and farmers. It is just at this point that the conservative function of the family fixation reveals itself most clearly, in the form of an inhibition in the bearer of the revolution. His fixation to wife and children, to the home if he has one, may it be ever so poor, his tendency to stick in a rut, etc., all this holds him back when he is supposed to proceed to the main action, the establishment of a self-governing work-democratic society.

In the development of the fascist dictatorship in Germany, for example, the familial fixation was a potent inhibition of revolutionary forces; this fixation gave Hitler a solid basis on which to build up an imperialistic, nationalistic ideology. In the same way, the fixation to the family was an inhibitory factor in the revolutionary *collectivization* of life. There is a serious contradiction between the disintegration of the social basis of the family on the one hand and the old, tenacious familial human structure on the other hand which emotionally, though mostly unconsciously, wishes to preserve the compulsive family. The replacement of the patriarchal family form by the work collective is undoubtedly the basis of the revolutionary cultural problem. The cry, "Away from the family!" is more often deceptive than not. Usually those who shout the loudest are the ones with the strongest unconscious fixation to the family. They are the last ones to be entrusted with the solution, theoretical and practical, of the most difficult of all problems, that of replacing familial ties with collective social ties. If, now, society does not succeed, simultaneously with the abolition of authoritarian social principles, in dissolving also its anchoring in the psychic structure of the family individual; if thus the family emotions continue to exist, an ever increasing contradiction will develop between the economic and the cultural development of a work-democratic society. Since only human beings with the help of machines make history,

but not machines alone, the establishment of social ownership of the means of production may lay the *foundation* for a free, self-governing society, but that does not mean that there is going to be a free, self-governing structure built on it. *The revolution in the ideological superstructure fails to take place, because the bearer of this revolution, the psychic structure of human beings, was not changed.*

In Trotsky's "Everyday Questions" we find ample material concerning the disintegration of the family during the years of 1919 and 1920. The following facts were noted:

The family, including the proletarian family, began to "disintegrate." The fact was not being denied, and was interpreted in diverse ways; some were "disquieted," others reserved, still others did not know what to make of it. All agreed that they were confronted with "some major, very chaotic process which might soon take on a tragic form" and which "did not as yet disclose its possibilities of a new, higher form of family order." Many believed that the disintegration of the workers' family resulted from a "bourgeois influence on the proletariat." Others considered this a misinterpretation, pointing out that it was a matter of a much deeper and more complex problem; that the main process lay in the pathological and critical "evolution of the proletarian family" itself, the first chaotic stages of which they were witnessing.

They pointed out that the process of disintegration of the family was far from concluded, that, rather, it was still in full swing. That everyday life was much more conservative than economy, among other things because it was much less conscious than the latter. It was further noted that the disintegration of the old family was not limited to the top strata which were most exposed to the new conditions, but went far beyond the avant-garde. The opinion was expressed that the revolutionary avant-garde was only affected earlier and more intensively by a process which was inevitable for the whole class.

Husband as well as wife were more and more absorbed by public functions; this lessened the demands which the family

could make on its members. Adolescents began to grow up in the collectives. Thus arose a *competition between family obligations and social obligations*. The latter, however, were new and young, while the family ties were old and pervaded every corner of everyday life and of the psychic structure. The sexual emptiness of the average marriage could not compete with the life-affirmative sexual relationships in the collectives. All this happened on the basis of an increasing elimination of the strongest family tie, the economic whiphand of the father over wife and children. The economic tie was broken, and with it the sexual inhibition. But that did not yet mean "sexual freedom." *External* freedom for sexual happiness is not yet sexual happiness. The latter presupposes, first of all, the psychic capacity to create and to enjoy it. In the family, healthy sexual needs, as a rule, had been replaced by infantile attitudes and pathological sexual habits. The family members would hate each other, consciously or unconsciously, and would drown out this hatred with a forced affection and sticky dependence which hid the underlying hatred only insufficiently. One of the main difficulties was the inability of the women—genitally crippled and unprepared for economic independence as they were—to give up the slave-like protection of the family and the substitute gratification which lay in their domination over the children. The woman, because her whole life was sexually empty and economically dependent, had made the upbringing of her children the content of her life. Any restriction of this relationship, though it may have been for the good of the children, she experienced as a serious deprivation and fought against it. Understandably enough; it was her most important substitute gratification. Gladkow's novel *NEW EARTH* shows that the fight for the development of the collective met no difficulty which could in any way compare with this fight of the women for the old home, family and children. The collectivization of life took place as a result of decrees from above and support of revolutionary youth who broke the chains of parental authority. But every average individual was inhibited, in every step in the direction of collectivization, by the family ties, par-



ticularly by his own unconscious familial dependence and longing.

All these difficulties and conflicts which appeared in everyday living were by no means the expression of an "accidental" and "chaotic" condition resulting from people's "stupidity" or "immorality"; rather, this condition arose according to a definite law which governs the relationship between the sexual forms and the forms of social organization.

In primitive society, which has a collective and work-democratic organization, the unit is the clan, comprising all the blood relatives of a common mother. Within this clan, which is also the economic unit, there is no other marriage than the loose ties of a sexual relationship. To the extent to which, as a result of economic changes, the clan becomes subject to the potentially patriarchal family of the chief, the clan disintegrates. Family and clan enter an antagonistic relationship. In the place of the clan, the family becomes more and more the economic unit and thus the germ of the patriarchy. The chief of the matriarchal clan organization, originally in harmony with the clan society, gradually turns into the patriarch of the family, thus acquires economic preponderance and increasingly develops into the patriarch of the whole tribe. The first class difference, then, is that between the family of the chief and the lower clans of the tribe.

In the succeeding development from matriarchy to patriarchy, the family acquires, in addition to its economic function, the far more significant function of changing the human structure from that of the free clan member to that of the suppressed family member. The East Indian family of today illustrates this function most clearly. By differentiating itself from the clan, the family becomes not only the source of the class distinction, but also of social suppression within and outside of itself. The "family man" who now develops helps to reproduce the patriarchal class organization. The basic mechanism of this reproduction is the change from sex-affirmation to sex-negation; its basis is the economic domination of the chief.

Let us summarize the essential points of this psychic change: The relationship between clan members, which was free and

voluntary, based only on common vital interests, is replaced by a conflict between economic and sexual interests. Voluntary achievement in work is replaced by compulsive work and rebellion against it; natural sexual sociality is replaced by the demands of morality; voluntary, happy, love relationship is replaced by "marital duty"; clan solidarity is replaced by familial ties and rebellion against them; sex-economically regulated life is replaced by genital repression, neurotic disturbances and sexual perversions; the naturally strong, self-reliant biological organism becomes weak, helpless, dependent, fearful of God; the orgastic experiencing of nature is replaced by mystical ecstasy, "religious experience" and unfulfilled vegetative longing; the weakened ego of the individual seeks strength in the identification with the tribe, later the "nation," and with the chief of the tribe, later the patriarch of the tribe and the king of the nation. With that, the birth of the vassal structure has taken place; the structural anchoring of human subjugation is secured.

The social revolution in the S.U., in its initial phases, revealed the renewed reversal of this process: the re-establishment of primitive work-democratic conditions on a higher, civilized level, and the revolution *from sex-negation to sex-affirmation*.

According to Marx, one of the chief tasks of the social revolution is the abolition of the family. (With that, of course, is meant the *compulsive* family.) What Marx had deduced theoretically from the social process was later confirmed by the development of social organization in the S.U. The old family began to be replaced by an organization which had certain similarities with the old clan of primitive society: the *socialist collective* in school, youth communes, etc. The difference between the old clan and the socialist collective is that the former is based on blood relationship and becomes an economic unit on that basis; the socialist collective, on the other hand, is not based on blood relationship but on common economic functions; the economic unit necessarily leads to personal relationships which finally make it also a sexual collective. *Just as in primitive society the family destroyed the clan, so does the economic collective destroy the family.* The

process is reversed. If the compulsive family is upheld ideologically or structurally, the development of the collective is inhibited. If the collective is incapable of overcoming this inhibition, it is destroyed by the familial structure of its members, as happened in the youth communes (*cf.* Chapter XII). The process taking place in the early phases of collectivistic development is characterized by the following conflict: *The conflict between economic collective with its sex-affirmative striving toward sexual independence on the one hand, and the familial, dependent, sex-negative structure of the individuals on the other hand.*

## CHAPTER IX

# THE SEXUAL REVOLUTION

### 1. PROGRESSIVE LEGISLATION

Soviet sexual legislation was the clearest expression of the first attack of the sexual revolution on the reactionary sexual order. This legislation literally put upside down most of the traditions. It will be shown that where this change was not complete, the sexual reaction soon made headway. In order to better understand the antithesis between sex-moralistic and sex-economic regulation, one has to compare the revolutionary legislation with the earlier Tsaristic one. It is not necessary to show in detail that the liberalistic and "democratic" sexual laws are in principle no different from the Tsaristic ones, and that, as far as sexual suppression is concerned, the difference is only slight. The measures for a sex-moralistic authoritarian regulation are basically always the same. To point this out is important because the argument has been raised that the Soviet measures only replaced the capitalistic order by another authoritarian order, that, for example, the Soviet marriage law was nothing but the abolition of suppression, and not a basically *different* regulation. The essence of sex-economy, however, is just this fundamental difference.

To begin with, here is an example from the Tsaristic laws:

Art. 106: The husband is held to love his wife like his own body, to live in harmony with her, to help her when she is ill. He is held to provide for her according to his situation and ability.

Art. 107: The wife is held to obey her husband as the head of the family, to remain with him in love, respect and unlimited obedience, to do him every favor and show him all affection as a housewife.

Art. 164: *The rights of parents:* The power of the parents extends to all children of either sex and of any age . . .

Art. 165: The parents have the right, for the improvement of obstreperous and disobedient children, to use corrective measures at home. If these are unsuccessful, the parents have the right

1) to have their children, of either sex, put in prison for willfully disobeying parental power, for immoral living or other obvious vices;

2) to start proceedings against the children at a court of law. The punishment for willful disobedience of the parental power, immoral living and other obvious vices, is imprisonment for 2 to 4 months, without a special investigation by the courts. In such cases, the parents have the right to have the sentence shortened or suspended as they see fit.

Let us see how the moral authoritarian regulation is expressed here. Clearly, the spouses are forced into a moral obligation with legal backing. The husband *must* love his wife, whether he can or not; the wife *must* be the obedient hausfrau; to change a situation which has become desolate is impossible. The law goes as far as demanding of the parents the use of their power in the interests of the authoritarian state: against "willful disobedience of the parental power" (which is identical with the power of the state) in the interests of producing vassal structures in the children; against "immoral living and other obvious vices," in the interest of securing the *means* of producing this structure. In the face of such naively candid avowal on the part of the patriarchal order it is inconceivable that the revolutionary movement does not have a better comprehension of sexual suppression as the *essential means* of human subjugation. Sex-economy did not have to discover the content and mechanisms of suppression; they are as clear as day in all patriarchal legislation and patriarchal culture. The problem is, rather, why this is *not* seen, why the powerful weapons which this candor provides are *not* used. The Tsarist, like any other reactionary sexual legislation, confirms and openly portrays the sex-economic concept: *The purpose of the authoritarian moral order is sexual subjugation*. Wherever one finds moral regulation and its main expedient, sexual suppression, real freedom is out of the question.

The significance ascribed to the sexual revolution by the social

revolution is evidenced by the fact that Lenin, as early as December 19 and 20, 1917, issued two relevant decrees. One was "About the dissolution of marriage"; true, its content was not as unequivocal as its title. The other was, "About civil marriage, children and the registration of marriages." Both laws deprived the husband of his prerogatives of domination in the family, gave the woman the complete right to economic and sexual determination and declared it to be a matter of course that the woman could freely determine her name, domicile and citizenship. Of course, these laws did in themselves nothing but guarantee externally free development to a process which was still to come. It was a matter of course that the revolutionary law intended the abolition of patriarchal power. Depriving the ruling class of power meant at the same time the elimination of the power of the father over the members of the family, and of the representation of the state *within* the family as the structure-forming cell of the class society. If the connection between the authoritarian state and the patriarchal family, the place where it is structurally reproduced, had been clearly recognized and practically managed, the revolution would have been saved not only many useless discussions and failures but also a great many regrettable regressions. In particular, one would have known what to do with the representatives of the old ideology and morality who began to muster their forces. They held the highest posts while the leaders of the revolutionary movement had no idea of the damage these functionaries were doing.

Divorce was made very easy. A sexual relationship which was considered a "marriage" could be as easily dissolved as it had been established. The only criterion was mutual agreement among the partners. No one could force somebody else into a relationship; there was only the free determination of the partners. Under these circumstances, "reasons for divorce" became meaningless. When a partner wanted to relinquish a sexual companionship he did not have to give reasons. Marriage and divorce became purely private matters.

The registration of a relationship was not mandatory. Even

when a relationship was registered, sexual relationships with others were "not prosecuted." However, not telling the partner about another relationship was considered "fraud." The obligation to pay alimony was considered only a "transition measure." The obligation lasted for six months after the separation and only if the partner was unemployed or otherwise incapable of making a living. That the obligation to pay alimony was thought of only as a transitory measure goes without saying in view of the Soviet tendency to establish full economic independence of all members of society. It had the function of helping over the first difficulties which stood in the way of establishing full personal and economic freedom. It has to be remembered that the compulsive family was only legally abolished, but not in reality. For as long as society cannot guarantee security to all adults and adolescents, this guarantee remains the function of the family and thus causes it to continue. Thus, registration as well as alimony were thought of as transitory measures. If a man had lived in a registered marriage for some time and had provided for his family, it was to the disadvantage of his family if he took on new obligations. If he failed to let his wife know about such new obligations, he undoubtedly defrauded her. This familial situation represents a contradiction of the meaning of the Soviet law which explicitly guaranteed personal freedom, even in relationships with several partners.

We see here for the first time a practical contradiction between the Soviet ideology of freedom and the actual conditions of familial living. The interest of the *not yet* independent woman in alimony is at variance with the striven-for freedom. We will later encounter many such contradictions. What is important is not that such contradictions existed, but *in what form* they were solved, that is, whether the solution was in the direction of the original goal of freedom, or in the direction of regression and inhibition.

Thus, Soviet legislation shows elements which ideologically anticipate the desired final result, and on the other hand, elements which take into account a period of transition. It is neces-

sary to follow, from the beginning, the dynamic course of these contradictions between the desired goal and momentary conditions. Only then will we understand the progressive inhibition of the sexual revolution in Soviet Russia.

Lenin is often called to witness in support of cultural and sexual reactionary attitudes. It is useful to remember, therefore, how clearly Lenin saw that legislation alone was no more than a beginning of a sexual and cultural revolution.

The discussions concerning the "new regulation of personal and cultural life" among the general population lasted for years. They showed an activity and an enthusiasm which only people can have who have just thrown off heavy chains and have clearly recognized that they have to start their lives all over again. These discussions of the "sexual question" started at the beginning of the revolution, increased more and more, and finally died down. *Why* they died down and gave way to a regressive movement is exactly what this book attempts to make comprehensible. It is significant that in 1925, at the time when these discussions of the sexual revolution were at their height, the commissar Kursky felt he had to preface a new draft of marital legislation with a quotation from Lenin:

Certainly, laws alone won't do, and we will in no case be satisfied with decrees alone. As to legislation, however, we have done everything that was asked of us to make the position of the woman equal to that of the man. We have a right to be proud: At present, the position of the woman in the Soviet Union is such that even from the standpoint of the most progressive nations it would have to be called ideal. In spite of that, we say it is nothing but a beginning.

A beginning of *what*? If one studies those discussions, one finds that the conservatives had the advantage of all the arguments and "proofs." The progressives, the revolutionaries, felt very clearly that they were not able to put this "new" thing into words. They fought valiantly, but finally tired and failed in the discussion, partly because they themselves were caught in old concepts from which they were unable to shake loose.



The contradictions in this most tragic of all revolutionary struggles have to be comprehended thoroughly so that one will be better prepared against the sexual reaction when the time comes when society becomes again aware of its task of reorganizing human living.

In the S.U., people were prepared neither theoretically nor practically for the difficulties which the cultural revolution brought with it. These difficulties were due partly to the ignorance of the psychic structure of a generation which was being taken over from the Tsaristic patriarchy, partly to the transitional character of the times.

## 2. WARNING VOICES FROM AMONG THE WORKERS

There is a common belief that the most essential part of the Soviet sexual revolution was its *legislation*. However, legislation or any other formal change has social significance only if it really "reaches the masses," that is, if it changes their psychic *structure*. Only in this way can an ideology or a program become a revolutionary power of historical dimensions: only if it achieves a *deep-reaching* change in the emotions and instinctual life of the masses. For the famous "subjective factor of history" is nothing but the psychic structure of the masses. It is what determines the development of society, be it by passively tolerating despotism and suppression, be it by adjustment to the technical processes of development instituted by the powers that be, or be it, finally, by actively taking part in the social development, as, for example, in a revolution. No concept of historical development can be called revolutionary if it considers the psychic structure of the masses as nothing but the result of economic processes, and not also as their motive power.

Consequently, the *effect* of the sexual revolution cannot be judged by the laws that were passed (which only indicate the then revolutionary spirit of the *leaders*), but only by their effect on the masses of people, and by the final outcome of this struggle for the "new life." We must ask, then: How did the masses react to the legislative changes? How did the minor functionaries of

the party, who were in close contact with the masses, react? What, finally, was the later attitude of the leaders?

This is what Alexandra Kollontay, a person long interested in the sexual problem, reports in *THE NEW MORALITY AND THE WORKING CLASS*, p. 65ff.:

The longer the sexual crisis lasts, the more difficult it becomes. With every attempt at a solution, things become more and more difficult. It seems as if people were unable to see the only way which would lead to a solution. The frightened people fall from one extreme into the other, and the sexual problem remains unsolved. The sexual crisis does not even spare the peasants. Like an infectious disease which respects neither wealth nor position, it visits castles as well as the dull abodes of workers and peasants . . . It would be a tremendous error to assume that only members of the economically secure classes are caught in its toils. The sexual crisis creates dramas among the working people which are no less violent or tragic than the psychological conflicts of the refined bourgeoisie.

In other words, the crisis of sexual life, of the small, private life, of family life, was at hand. The new marriage legislation, the "abolition of marriage," had only eliminated external hindrances. The real sexual revolution took place in actual everyday life. At first, the fact that the leaders of a state occupied themselves with the sexual problem was in itself a small revolution. But later on the minor functionaries took hold of the problem. The collapse of the old order resulted, at first, in nothing but chaos. But the simple, uneducated bearers of the revolution approached the monster courageously, while the "educated" and refined academicians wrote "treatises" or were completely unaware of the historical processes which were taking place.

In a booklet, *QUESTIONS OF EVERYDAY LIFE*, Trotsky called the attention of the Soviet public to the small questions of everyday life. But the sexual question he failed to mention. He had the functionaries speak their mind about practical everyday problems. As it turned out, they spoke mostly about the "family question." But not about legal or sociological problems of the

family, but about the difficulties of the *sexual* life. Previously, this had been strictly associated with the economic unit of the family; now that the family was disintegrating, the sexual life posed entirely new problems.

During the first few years of the revolution, the minor functionaries showed an excellent attitude. The *beginning* of the sexual revolution was entirely correct not only in its legislative aspect but also in the way in which people were able to see difficulties and to formulate questions. A few examples will illustrate this.

The functionary Kosakov expressed himself as follows:

Externally, family life has changed, that is, one has a more simple attitude toward it. But the basic evil has not changed, that is, the daily cares of the family member are not any lighter, and the dominance of one family member over the others continues to exist. People strive for collective living, and if family cares make this impossible, they become restless and neurasthenic.

As we see, Kosakov, in a very few sentences, has comprehended the following problems:

1. Externally, the family has changed; internally, everything is as it always was;
2. The family acted as a brake on the development of collective living;
3. The familial inhibition damaged the psychic health of its members; that means, it reduced their ability to work and their joy in work and produced psychic disturbances.

The following utterances disclose the effect of the economic revolution on the progressive disintegration of the family.

Kobosev: "Undoubtedly, the revolution has produced a great change in the family life of the worker. Especially when both husband and wife are working, the wife considers herself economically independent and having equal rights. Certain prejudices, such as that the husband is the head of the family, are being overcome. The patriarchal family disintegrates. In the workers' as well as the peasants'

families, there is a strong tendency to separation, to independent living, as soon as the material basis for existence makes itself felt."

Kulkov: "Undoubtedly, the revolution has changed family life, the attitudes toward the family and toward the emancipation of the woman. The husband is accustomed to consider himself the head of the family . . . In addition, there is the religious question, the denial of petit-bourgeois needs to the woman. Since, however, not much can be done with the means at hand, there are scandals. The wife, on her part, asks for more freedom, for the right to leave the children somewhere, to go with the husband more often where he goes. This is the cause of all kinds of scandals and scenes, which often lead to divorce. The Communists, when confronted with these problems, usually say that the family, and especially any quarrels between husband and wife, are a private matter."

The difficulties which are here called "the religious question" and the "denial of petit-bourgeois needs to the woman" we can unhesitatingly assume to be the expression of the conflict between family ties and the urge for sexual freedom. Scandals as a result of the lack of material facilities, such as lack of rooms, were, of course, inevitable. The attitude that "sexuality is a private matter" was unfortunate; it was essentially an expression of the inability of the members of the Communist party to manage the revolution in their own personal lives; therefore, they took refuge in a legal formula. This was well expressed by the functionary Markov who said:

I wish to point out the disastrous consequences of our misinterpretation of the concept of "free love." The result was that the Communists put a multitude of children in the world . . . The war has given us untold cripples. This misconception of free love will give us more and worse cripples. We have to come out and state frankly that we have done nothing in the way of education in this field which would give the workers a correct conception of these things. More than that, we must admit that when we will be asked these questions, we will be unable to answer them.

It was not that the Communists lacked the courage to tackle

these tasks; as will be shown, there was not sufficient knowledge to solve the difficulties. Seen from the point of view of the later development, these utterances already pointed to the tragedy which was to come. The functionary Koltsov pointed out:

These questions are *never discussed*. It is as if for some reason they were being *avoided*. I myself have never given them serious thought, they are new to me. They are extremely important and should be discussed.

The functionary Finkovsky recognized one of the reasons for this avoidance:

The subject is rarely talked about because *it hits home too closely* with everybody . . . The Communists usually point to the golden future and thus avoid going into acute problems . . . The workers know that in the Communist families things are even worse in this respect than in their own.

Tseitlin said the following:

In the literature, the problems of marriage and family, of the relations between man and woman, are not discussed at all. Nevertheless, *these are exactly the questions which interest the workers*, male and female alike. When such questions are going to be the topic of our meetings, *they know about it and flock to our meetings*. The masses feel that we hush up these problems, and in fact we do hush them up. I know that some people say that the Communist party has no definite views on these problems. And yet, the workers, both male and female, *keep asking these questions and find no answers to them*.

Such views and attitudes of workers, people who have no sexological schooling but derive all their knowledge from life itself, are worth more than any learned treatises on the "Sociology of the Family." They show that the abolition of the authoritarian system brought forth a critique and faculties of thought which previously had been hidden. Tseitlin, for example, without any sexological training or knowledge, described exactly what is

contended by sex-economy: *The interest of the mass individual is not political but sexual.* He clearly saw how the masses criticized—although perhaps not explicitly—the avoidance of sexual problems on the part of the revolutionary leaders. He realized that they had no clear views on the subject and therefore avoided it. And yet that was exactly the problem which the masses wanted to have solved.

The functionaries pointed emphatically to people's interest in sexual clarity and a new regulation of sexual relationships. People asked for good and low-priced informative literature. They talked of "family" and meant "sexuality." They knew that what was old was outworn and untenable, but they tried to deal with the new things in terms of the old, or, worse, in purely economic terms. In concrete terms it looked somewhat like this, as described by Lyssenko: Children in the street "behaved badly." For example, they played "Red Army." One recognized in that a "tinge" of militarism, but thought it, nevertheless, "good." But at times one would see "worse" kinds of play, that is, sexual playing, and was astonished that nobody interfered. But one racked one's brains how one might lead children "on the right path." The revolutionary element was apparent in the right instinct that one should *not* interfere; the conservative sexual anxiety led to concern. Had the new way of thinking not come into conflict with the old in the form of sexual anxiety, one would not have worried about leading the children on the "right," that is, asexual, path; instead, one would have closely observed the sexual manifestations of the children and would have asked oneself how infantile sexuality should be treated. But because childhood and sexuality did not seem to belong together, people became afraid and considered natural manifestations degeneracy.

Revolutionaries warned, "We are often told that we talk only about world-embracing problems. We should rather talk about the problems of everyday life." Concretely, with regard to the children's playing, this meant:

1. Should we act in favor of these plays or against them?
2. Is the sexuality of the children natural or not?

3. How shall we understand and regulate the relationship between infantile sexuality and work?

The control commissions were worried. The functionaries said: "There is no reason for concern. The Communist will go and live with the workers and will keep them in check. If we did not live with them we would lose contact with the masses." But the task was not simply that of keeping contact with the masses, but that of using the contact for concrete solutions. To try to "keep the masses in check" meant that one did not know what to do with the new manifestations of life which had just thrown off the shackles of authoritarian power; it meant, furthermore, replacing it with a new authoritarian power in the old sense. The task was, however, that of establishing a *new* kind of authority, one which would enable the masses to develop independence so that they finally could do without authority constantly watching over them.

The leaders, without being able to formulate their dilemma, were confronted by the alternative of breaking through to new forms of living or of returning to the old. Since the Communist party had no concept of the sexual revolution, since, furthermore, Engel's historical analysis explained only the social background but not the nature of the revolution which was taking place, a struggle developed which clearly demonstrates to all future generations the birth pangs of a cultural revolution.

At first one consoled oneself by pointing to the lack of the purely economic prerequisites. But the attitude, "first the economic questions, *then* those of everyday life" was wrong and only an expression of the unpreparedness for the seemingly chaotic forms of the cultural revolution. Often it was an evasion. True, a society which is exhausted by civil war, which is unable immediately to establish public kitchens, laundries, and kindergartens, must think first of all of the economic prerequisites. They are indeed the prerequisites for a cultural revolution, particularly in sexual life. But it was not just a matter of lifting the masses to the cultural level of the capitalist countries; that was only the most immediate task. It was also necessary to become clear as to

the *nature* of the "new culture," the "Socialist, revolutionary" culture.

At first, nobody was to blame. What had happened was that the revolution had encountered unexpected problems and the means of dealing with them could be found only when these difficulties had fully developed and required a practical solution. A retrogressive development was unavoidable. The fact should be remembered that this was the first successful social revolution. The struggle to comprehend its purely economic and political prerequisites was enormous. But today it is clear that *the cultural revolution posed infinitely more difficult problems than the political revolution*. This is easy to understand. The political revolution requires essentially nothing but a strong, trained leadership and the confidence of the masses in it. The cultural revolution, however, requires *an alteration of the psychic structure of the mass individual*. About this, there was hardly any scientific, let alone practical concept at that time. Here are a few glimpses of the result as it presented itself in 1935:

On August 29, 1935, the *Weltbühne* published an alarming article by Louis Fischer on the increase of reactionary sexual ideologies in the S.U. The fact that a Communist periodical published the article bears witness to the dangerousness of the situation. The article points out the following facts:

In the overcrowded city apartments, the youths find no room for a sexual life. The girls are being reminded that abortion is harmful, dangerous and undesirable, that it is much better to have babies. A film, "The Private Life of Peter Winogradow" makes propaganda for conventional marriage. "A film," writes Fischer, "that would find the approval of the most conservative circles in conservative countries." In the *Pravda* one reads: "In the Soviets, the family is a big and serious thing." Fischer is of the opinion that the Bolsheviks never really did anything about the family. True, they knew that there had been times in history when the family had not existed, they also admitted, theoretically, the dissolution of the family, but they had not abolished it; on the contrary, they had supported it. The regime, now that it no



longer had to fear the bad influence of the parents, welcomed its "necessary moral and cultural influence," that is, the sex-suppressing influence of the adult generation on the new generation.

An editorial in the *Pravda* in 1935 stated that only a good family man could be a good Soviet citizen. "A thing like that would have been inconceivable in 1923," writes Fischer. Similarly, statements like the following: "If anybody still contends that interest in the family is a petit-bourgeois characteristic, he belongs himself to the lowest category of petit-bourgeois." Prohibition of abortion in the case of the first child would probably do away with many a love affair and with promiscuity and would further "serious marriage." Newspaper articles by professors about the great harm done by abortion became more and more numerous.

When the daily press continues to thunder against abortion; when this propaganda is accompanied by the glorification of festive marriage ceremonies; when the sanctity of marital duty is emphasized and mothers of triplets and quadruplets receive special prizes; when articles are written about women who never resorted to abortion; when an underpaid school teacher, mother of four children, receives public praise because she did not refuse having a fifth child, "in spite of the difficulties of feeding them all"—then, writes Fischer, one thinks of Mussolini. Girls who resist sexual temptation are no longer considered "conservative" or even "counterrevolutionary." "The basis of the family should be love and not the satisfaction of physical needs."

These few excerpts show that the sexual ideology of the leading groups in the S.U. is no longer any different from the ideology of the leading groups in any conservative country. There is, undoubtedly, a regression to conservative sexual moralism.

The official ideology of the S.U. had its effect also in Western Europe. The *Humanité* of October 31, 1935, wrote the following:

*Save the family!* Help us in our great inquiry in the interest of the right to love. It is a well-known fact that the birth rate in France is decreasing at an alarming rate . . . The Communists are confronted by a very grave situation. The country which they are to revolutionize,

the French world, runs the danger of being crippled and depopulated.

The maliciousness of a dying capitalism, its immorality, the egoism it creates, the misery, the clandestine abortions which it provokes, *destroy the family*. The Communists want to *fight in the defense of the French family*. They have definitely broken with the petit-bourgeois, individualistic and anarchic tradition which makes an ideal of sterilization.

They want to take over a strong country and a *fertile race*. The U.S.S.R. points the way. But it is necessary *immediately* to take active measures to *save the race*.

In my book, *THE MISFORTUNE OF BEING YOUNG* I have enumerated the difficulties of present-day youth in establishing a home, and have defended their *right to love*.

The right to love, love of the man and the woman, love of the children for the parents, of the parents for the children, this is the subject of our new inquiry . . . which will be aided by the letters from our readers who report on their difficulties, their anxieties and hopes. An inquiry of the means for saving the French family by giving motherhood and childhood, *by giving families with many children the place and the advantages* which they must have in the country. Write to us, youths, fathers and mothers . . .

P. Vaillant-Couturier.

This is how a Communist thinks who vies with the National Socialists in the race theory and the advocacy of the family with many children. Such an article in a Socialist organ is catastrophic. The competition is hopeless: the Fascists are ever so much better at this business.

Arrogant criticism and fault-finding would be a sure sign of ignorance in this situation. The most important thing is respect for the magnitude, complexity and diversity of the tasks at hand. This respect is the most important prerequisite of the necessary courage and seriousness which such historical processes require.

In the Russian cultural revolution, the "new life" broke through, but it was not understood, and the Old put on the brakes. Old ways of thinking and feeling sneaked into the new ways. The New first liberated itself from the Old, fought for a clear expression, failed to find it and thus sank back.

We must try to understand in which way the Old smothered

the New if we are to avoid having the same thing happen another time.

We must learn from the Russian revolution that the economic revolution, the social ownership of the social means of production and the political establishment of social democracy (dictatorship of the proletariat) goes automatically hand in hand with a revolution in attitudes toward sexuality and in sexual relationships. Like the economic and political revolution, the sexual revolution must also be consciously comprehended and guided in a *forward* direction.

But what does this "forward direction," which is preceded by a collapse of the old, look like concretely? Few people know how burning was the struggle for the "new life," for a satisfactory sex life, in the Soviet Union.

## CHAPTER X

# THE INHIBITION OF THE SEXUAL REVOLUTION

### I. THE BACKGROUND OF THE INHIBITION

Around 1923, a certain development became more apparent which was aimed *against* the revolutionary changes in personal and cultural life; it was not until the years between 1933 and 1935 that it also became tangible in regressive legislative measures. This process constitutes an *inhibition* of the sexual and cultural revolution in the S.U. Before entering upon the chief characteristics of this inhibition, we have to familiarize ourselves with some of its prerequisites.

Economico-politically, the Russian revolution was guided entirely and consciously by the Marxist theory of economics and politics. All economic processes were seen in the light of the theory of historical materialism. But as far as the cultural revolution was concerned—to say nothing of its core, the sexual revolution—neither Marx nor Engels had provided any investigations which could have guided the leaders of the revolution. Lenin himself, in criticizing a book by Ruth Fischer, stressed the fact that the sexual revolution, like the sexual social process in general, was not at all understood from the standpoint of dialectic materialism, and that its mastery would require a tremendous experience. He thought that if anybody would comprehend this problem in its totality and real significance, he would do the greatest service to the revolution. As we have seen, the functionaries were aware of the fact that here was a *new* field for investigation. Trotsky also pointed out again and again how new and how little understood was the field of cultural and sexual revolution.

The first reason for the inhibition of the sexual revolution, then, was the fact that *there was no theory of the sexual revolution*.

A second reason was the fact that all those who should have guided this spontaneous revolution were caught in old concepts and formalisms. To mention only a few of these erroneous concepts: the idea that being sexual is incompatible with being social, the assumption of an antithesis of sexuality and sociality. Further, the idea that sexuality meant a diversion from the class struggle. The question was not raised as to *what kind* of sexuality meant a diversion from the class struggle, nor under what conditions the sexual crisis could be made part of the class struggle. Instead, they believed that sexuality in itself was at variance with the class struggle. Another erroneous concept was the alleged incompatibility of sexuality and culture, their absolute antithesis. Furthermore, the whole problem of the sexual process and of sexual gratification was obscured by talking about "family" instead of "sexuality." Even a superficial glance at the history of sexual reforms would have shown that the patriarchal family is by no means an institution for the protection of sexual gratification. It is, on the contrary, at variance with it. It is essentially an economic institution and creates a conflict between economic and sexual needs.

Another reason for the inhibition of the sexual revolution was the erroneous concepts of the sexual revolution. According to these concepts, the overthrow of the bourgeoisie and the institution of Soviet legislation had in themselves "brought about" the sexual revolution; or the sexual question would "solve itself" once the proletariat was in power. What was overlooked was the fact that the power of the proletariat and sexual legislation could do no more than create the external conditions for a changed sexual life. Acquiring a building lot does not mean having the building; it means that the task of building only begins. The following is an example of these misconceptions (G. G. L. Alexander, Moscow, in *Die Internationale*, 1927):

The solution of the great social problem, the abolition of the private

means of production, solved also, in principle, the problem of marriage which is basically an economic problem . . . The Communist concept is that with the gradual realization of a basically different organization of social living the marriage problem will disappear as a social problem . . . Unrequited love, with its danger of loneliness and pain, will hardly play a role in a society which sets collective tasks and offers collective joys, a society in which individual sorrows are no longer important . . .

This manner of treating difficult problems of mass psychology is misleading and dangerous: "Change the economic basis of society and its institutions, and the human relationships will change of themselves." After the success of the fascist movement, the fact can no longer be doubted that these relationships, in the form of people's psychic and sexual structure, become a power in themselves which in turn has a far-reaching influence on society. Not to see this means eliminating living man from history.

In brief, things were being oversimplified. Ideological changes were thought of as all too immediately and directly connected with their economic basis. What, then, are the "retroactive effects of the ideology on the economic basis" that are so much talked about and so little understood?

The woman with a strict marital and familial attitude becomes jealous when the husband begins to enter political life. She is afraid that he will get entangled with other women. The patriarchal husband will have the same reaction when his wife begins to show political interests. Parents, proletarians included, do not like to see their adolescent daughters go to meetings. They fear that the girls will "go wrong," that is, start a sexual life. Though the children ought to go to the collective, the parents still make their old possessive demands on them. They are horrified when the child begins to look at them with a critical eye. These examples could be multiplied indefinitely.

Many attempts to deal with these problems ended in empty slogans of "culture and human personality." Theoretically, people knew that the antithesis of culture and nature should be abol-

ished. When it came to practical attempts at a solution, however, old antisexual and moralistic concepts would creep in again. Thus, Batkis, director of the Moscow Institute of Social Hygiene, wrote in his booklet, *THE SEXUAL REVOLUTION IN THE SOVIET UNION*:

During the revolution, the element of eroticism, of sexualism, played only a minor role, because youth was riding along on the wave of revolutionary feeling and was living only for the great ideas. But when the quieter times of reconstruction came, it was feared that youth, as in 1905, would now, cooled off and sober, start to engage in unrestricted eroticism.

On the basis of the experiences in the S.U., I say that the woman, in experiencing social liberation and becoming acquainted with public social tasks, that is, in her transition from a mere woman to a human being, *went sexually cold to some extent*. Her sexuality is, though perhaps only temporarily, repressed . . . The task of sexual pedagogy in the S.U. is to bring up healthy individuals, members of a future society in whom there is complete harmony between their natural drives and their great social tasks. To this end, everything that is creative and constructive in the natural drives must be furthered, and everything that could become harmful to the development of the personality of the member of the collective should be eliminated . . . Free love in the S.U. is not an unbridled, wild living out, but the ideal relationship of two free independent people who love each other.

Thus even Batkis, an otherwise clear thinker, after making a correct start, got bogged down in slogans. The sexuality of youth is called "sexualism," the sexual problem an "element of erotics." One finds, without questioning it, that the woman went sexually cold to some extent, that she changed from a "mere woman" to a "human being." Everything has to be eliminated which could become harmful to the development of the personality (what is meant, of course, is sexuality); the unbridled, wild "living out" is contrasted to the "ideal" relationship of two "free, independent people who love each other." The masses were entangled in these concepts like fish in a net. If one looks at these concepts somewhat more closely, their complete empti-

ness and their antisexual, i.e., reactionary, character becomes obvious. What is "wild living out"? Does that mean that a man and a woman should *not* be living out in the sexual embrace? And what is the "ideal" relationship? That relationship in which people are capable of full "animal" surrender? But then they are "wild"! In brief, nothing but words which, instead of comprehending the realities of sexual life and its conflicts, only obscure the truth in order to avoid the contact with these painful subjects.

What is the basis of this confused thinking? The failure to distinguish the *pathological* sexuality of youth, a sexuality which was at variance with cultural achievement, from *healthy* sexuality which is the physiological basis of cultural achievement; the antithesis of "mere woman" (that is, *sensual* woman), and "human being" (that is, *active*, sublimating, woman), instead of realizing that the *sexual* awareness and self-confidence on the part of the woman is the psychic basis of her social emancipation and activity; the antithesis of "living out" and "ideal relationship," instead of realizing that the capacity for *full* sexual surrender to the beloved partner is the safest basis for a companionship.

## 2. MORALIZING INSTEAD OF COMPREHENSION AND PRACTICAL MASTERY

One of the essential characteristics of the inhibition of the sexual revolution was that the chaotic conditions brought about by the sexual revolution were judged moralistically instead of being viewed as the manifestation of a revolutionary transition period. There were cries of desperation to the effect that chaos had broken out, that discipline had to be reintroduced, that "inner discipline had to take the place of external compulsion." This was only the old thing in a new disguise, because "inner discipline" cannot be demanded or enforced; it is either there or it is not. In demanding "inner discipline" instead of external compulsion, one was again exerting an external pressure. One should have asked, How can things be changed in such a way that people have a *voluntary* discipline, without its being forced upon them? The "equality of the woman" was a revolutionary



principle. Economically, the principle of equal wages for equal work had really been established. Sexually, there was at first no objection if the woman made the same sexual demands as the man. But that was not the important thing. The question was, Were women structurally *capable* of making use of their freedom? Were the men? Had they not all previously acquired a structure which was antisexual, moralistic, inhibited, lascivious, jealous, possessive and generally neurotic? What was necessary first of all was to comprehend the chaos, to distinguish clearly the revolutionary forces from the reactionary, inhibiting forces, and to realize that a better form of living cannot be born without birth pangs.

Soon, the inhibition of the sexual revolution began to crystallize around certain centers. The high Soviet authorities at first assumed a passive attitude. The common formula was, "The economic problems come first; the sexual problems we shall tackle later on." The press was almost exclusively at the disposal of economic interests. I do not know whether there were any journals devoted specifically to the problems of the sexual revolution.

Of decisive importance was the influence of the intellectuals. Their origin, structure and thinking made them *opposed* to the sexual revolution. They idealized the old revolutionaries who, as a result of their difficult tasks, were not able to lead a satisfactory sex life; they applied this enforced way of living from the revolutionary leader to the masses and made an ideal of it. This was, of course, harmful. One cannot expect of the masses what the tasks demand of the leaders. In addition, why should one? Fanina Halle, instead of making clear the disastrous influence of such an ideology on the masses, praises it in her book, *WOMAN IN SOVIET RUSSIA*. She writes about the old revolutionaries:

They were all young, many very beautiful and artistically talented (Vera Figner, Ludmila Wolkenstein), thoroughly feminine and as if made for personal happiness. Nevertheless, the personal, the erotic and feminine always remained in the background. The traits of chas-

tity and purity in the relationships of the sexes which were thus cultivated and which have influenced that whole generation of Russian intellectuals and the following generation, still predominates in the relationship between man and woman in the Soviet Union and continues to astonish foreigners who have such a different attitude . . .

This complete emancipation from everything Philistine, this complete denial of social barriers, have furthered the development of pure, strictly companionate relationships based on common intellectual interests . . .

. . . With all the more enthusiasm did some of the imprisoned revolutionaries apply themselves to mathematics, and some of these fanatics were made so excited by this that they went on with these problems even in their dreams.

Again, from these statements it is not clear whether in a so-called "pure" relationship the genital act is permitted or not, whether it includes or excludes full vegetative surrender. It is nonsense to postulate an ideal for the masses according to which mathematics become an exciting sensation and take the place of the most natural of human needs. Such an ideology is not honest and not in keeping with the facts. The revolution should not defend dishonest ideals, but the real life of love and work.

In 1929 I heard in Moscow that youth was being given sexual enlightenment. It was immediately evident that this enlightenment was *antisexual*. Essentially, it was nothing but information about venereal diseases and about conception, in order to scare the youngsters away from sexual intercourse. Of an honest discussion of the sexual conflicts there was not a trace.

When I asked at the Commissariat for Public Health how masturbation in adolescents was being treated, I was told, by "diversion, of course." The medical point of view—which in Austrian and German sex hygiene clinics had become a matter of course—that one should free a youngster of his guilt feelings and thus make satisfactory masturbation possible for him, was rejected as horrible.

When I asked the directress of the Office for Maternal Health, Lebedeva, whether the adolescents were being instructed in the

necessity and the use of contraceptives, she told me that such a measure would be incompatible with Communist discipline. In talking with a youth group in a glass factory near Moscow I found that the youngsters were inclined to laugh about such attitudes on the part of the authorities; on the other hand, they did not know how to get together with their girls and had severe guilt feelings about masturbation; in brief, they showed the typical conflicts of puberty.

The sexual reaction made a particularly harmful use of some poorly understood statements of Lenin's. Lenin was extremely reticent in expressing definite views on sexual problems. His correct grasp of the task of the revolution in this respect was expressed in his statement, "Communism should not bring asceticism, but enjoyment of life and vigor in life through a fulfilled love life." But what really became known, thanks to the sex-reactionary attitude of the responsible circles, was that passage from Lenin's Talk with Klara Zetkin in which he discussed the "chaotic" sexual life of youth:

The changed attitude of youth toward the questions of sex life is, of course, "fundamental" and depends on a theory. Many call their attitude "revolutionary" or "Communist," and believe sincerely that that is so. I, the oldster, am not impressed by that. Though I am not an ascetic, it seems to me that this so-called "new sexual life" of youth, and often also of older people, is often enough nothing but an expression of the good old bourgeois brothel. All that has nothing in common with the freedom of love as we Communists understand it. I am sure you know the famous theory according to which the gratification of the instinctual love life in the Communist society is as simple and incidental as the drinking of a glass of water. This "glass-of-water-theory" has made part of our youth completely crazy. It has been disastrous to many boys and girls. Its advocates contend that it is Marxistic. No thank you, for such a Marxism which makes all phenomena and all changes in the ideological superstructure of society derive directly and immediately from its economic basis. Things are not as simple as all that . . .

To try to reduce these ideological changes, divorced from their

context with the total ideology, to the economic basis of society would be rationalism, and not Marxism. Surely, thirst demands to be quenched. But will a normal individual, under normal circumstances, lie down in the gutter and drink from a puddle? Or even from a dirty glass? What is more important than everything else is the social side. Drinking water is an individual act. Love requires two people and may result in a third life. This fact contains a social interest, a duty toward society.

Let us try to understand what Lenin meant here. First of all, he refuted economism, that concept which derives everything cultural directly from the economic basis. He recognized the fact that the refusal of tender relationships in the sexual life of youth was nothing but the old conservative view in reverse; **and the** further fact that the glass-of-water-theory was nothing but the exact reverse of the old conservative ideology of asceticism. Lenin also recognized that this sexual life was not the desired, sex-economically regulated one, for it was antisocial and unsatisfactory.

What, then, was lacking in Lenin's formulation? First of all, a *positive* concept of what should take the place of the old in the sexual life of youth. There are only three possibilities: abstinence, masturbation, and satisfactory heterosexual relationships. Thus Communism should have clearly designated one of them as the desirable goal. Lenin did not take a programmatic attitude; he only repudiated the loveless sexual acts and pointed in the direction of a "happy sex life," and that excludes abstinence as well as masturbation. Certainly Lenin did not advocate abstinence! And yet, as pointed out before, it was exactly this passage of his about the glass-of-water-theory which again and again was used by the timid souls and the moralists in defense of their disastrous concepts in the fight against adolescent sexuality.

They had nothing positive to contribute. Instead of trying to understand the enormous struggle of youth and trying to help them, they poked fun at them. Thus the well-known Communist Smidovitch, a woman, wrote in *Pravda*:

1. Any Komsomolets, member of the Communist Youth, any rab-fakowets, student of the workers faculty and any other greenhorn is allowed to satisfy his sexual needs. For unknown reasons, this seems to be an unwritten law. Sexual abstinence is considered "petit-bourgeois." 2. Any Komsomolka, any rabfakowka or other female student has to do the bidding of any man to whom she seems pleasing, otherwise she is "petit-bourgeois" and does not deserve the name of a proletarian student. How such African passions may have developed here in our North is more than I can understand. And 3., there is the third act of this peculiar trilogy: the pale, drawn face of a pregnant girl. In the waiting room of the "Commission for the authorization of abortion" you can see any number of the results of such Komsomolets romances.

Such attitudes betray the pride of the "Nordic," the sexually "pure" individual, the Smidovitch, comparing herself with the "primitive." It did not occur to this Nordic individual that the pregnancies and abortions could be avoided by instructing youth in the use of contraceptives and by providing hygienic conditions for a sexual life. All this in the interest of "Soviet culture." But it was to no avail: these statements made by Smidovitch were displayed on German billboards as a description of "Communist sexual ideology!"

And as always when one does not dare to face the reality of adolescent sexuality, the slogan, after a period of heavy conflict with youth came to be, in the S.U. also: *Abstinence*. A slogan which is as convenient as it is catastrophic and incapable of realization. Fanina Halle reported:

The older generation which was called into consultation, scientists, sex hygienists, party officials, advocated the same attitude as Lenin, an attitude which Semashko, the Commissar for Public Health, summarized as follows in a letter to the student youth:

"Comrades, you have come to the universities and technical institutes for your studies. That is the main goal of your life. And as all your impulses and attitudes are subordinated to this main goal, as you must deny yourself many enjoyments because they might interfere with your main goal, that of studying and of becoming collabora-

tors in the reconstruction of the state, so you must subordinate all other aspects of your existence to this goal. The state is as yet too poor to take over the support of you and the education of the children. Therefore, our advice to you is: *Abstinence!*"

And what always results from sexual abstinence developed in the S.U. also: sexual delinquency. This misleading reference to Lenin must be protested against. Lenin never advocated abstinence on the part of youth. Certainly, when Lenin spoke of "vigor and enjoyment in life through a gratifying sex life," he did not mean the asceticism of impotent scientists and shriveled-up sex hygienists.

The then responsible authorities in the S.U. cannot be blamed for not knowing the solution to these difficulties. But they must be blamed for avoiding the difficulties, for taking the line of least resistance, for not asking themselves what it all meant, for talking about the revolution of life without looking for it in real life; for misinterpreting the existing chaos as a "moral chaos" in the sense of the political reaction instead of comprehending it as chaotic conditions which were inherent in the transition to new sexual forms; and last but not least for repudiating the contributions to an understanding of the problem which the German sex-political movement had to offer.

What, then, were these difficulties which finally became so great that they resulted in the inhibition of the sexual revolution?

First of all, a sexual revolution takes place in different forms than an economic revolution: not in forms which can be put into plans and laws, but in all the details of everyday personal life, complicated by all kinds of complex and subterranean emotional elements. The complexity and multitude of these details alone make it impossible to master the sexual chaos by handling these details. From this, the conclusion is drawn, "Private life hinders the class struggle; consequently, there should be no private life." Of course one cannot try to master the chaos by trying to master each single case individually. These problems have to be solved on a mass basis. But among the individual difficulties

there are many that apply to millions. One of these, for example, is the problem under which every halfway healthy adolescent suffers most acutely: the problem of how to be alone with his girl. There is no doubt that the solution of this problem alone, that is, providing the possibility for undisturbed being together sexually, would immediately eliminate a great deal of the chaos. For if in one city borough alone there are thousands of youngsters who do not know where to go to embrace their girls, they will do it in dark alleys and will disturb each other, get into scraps, will feel unsatisfied, cranky and will be driven to excesses; in brief, they create "chaos." As obvious as this is, there is literally no organization, political or otherwise, which ever would come out for the necessity of *providing youth with quarters for their being together sexually undisturbed.*

### 3. OBJECTIVE CAUSES OF THE INHIBITION

The difficulties thus far described derived from the ignorance and the prejudices of the responsible functionaries. But the impetus of the revolution was so great that this inhibition on the part of individual functionaries and reactionary professors could not have made itself felt decisively if there had not been difficulties in the *objective* process itself which worked in the same direction. It would be wrong to say, therefore, that the sexual, and with that the cultural revolution, failed as a result of the ignorance and sexual anxiety of the leading circles. The inhibition of a revolutionary movement of the magnitude of the Soviet sexual revolution can come about only as the result of decisive objective hindrances. They can be roughly summarized in the following groups:

1. The laborious task of reconstruction in general, particularly in view of the cultural backwardness of the old Russia, of civil war and famine.

2. The lack of a theory of sexual revolution. The fact has to be remembered that the Soviet sexual revolution was the *first* revolution of its kind.

3. The sex-negative structure of people in general, that is, the

that one night. It is one thing if a man, irresponsibly, leaves his wife and children for the sake of some superficial sexual relationship; it is an altogether different thing if a man, because he is sexually healthy, makes an intolerable marriage more tolerable by maintaining a secret happy relationship with another woman. These examples may suffice to illustrate the following points:

1. What appears as chaos to the people who are warped by the authoritarian sexual order is not necessarily chaos; on the contrary, it may be the rebellion of the organism against impossible life conditions.

2. Much of what is really chaos is not a result of any immorality on the part of youth, but the result of an unsolvable conflict between natural sexual needs and an environment which in every possible way impedes their gratification.

3. The transition from an internally chaotic, externally seemingly orderly way of living to an internally orderly way of living, though this may appear chaotic to the Babbitts, can take place only through a phase of heavy confusion.

It must be remembered that the human beings of our times have a tremendous fear of just that kind of life for which they long so much but which is at variance with their own structure. True, the sexual resignation which characterizes the overwhelming majority of people means indolence, emptiness in life, paralysis of all healthy activity and initiative, or brutal, sadistic excesses; but at the same time it provides a relative calm in life. It is as if death were already anticipated in the way of living; people live toward death. They prefer this living death if their structure is incapable of dealing with the uncertainties and difficulties of a life that is really alive. One only has to remember, for example, people's fear of not finding a suitable sexual partner after having lost their partner, no matter how painful the living together may have been. Or the thousands of murders of sexual partners which occur because the idea that the partner may embrace somebody else sexually is intolerable. Such facts play a much more decisive role in real life than, say, the political voyages of a Laval. For governments can do with populations what



they please only as long as people keep struggling, constantly, unconsciously and hopelessly, with these most personal problems which touch the core of their lives. Suppose one would find, in a city district of 100,000 people, all the women who are in difficulties because of the upbringing of their children, the infidelity of their husbands, and their own incapacity for sexual gratification, and one would ask them what they think of the diplomatic errands of a Laval. Their answers would show that millions of women, men and adolescents are so preoccupied with these problems of their personal lives that they are not even aware of what the politicians are doing with them.

## CHAPTER XI

# LIBERATION OF BIRTH CONTROL AND HOMOSEXUALITY, AND SUBSE- QUENT INHIBITION

In the field of birth control, there was a remarkable clarity of concepts from the very beginning. The basic concepts were as follows:

As long as a society is not willing or able to take care of the children, it has no right to demand of the mothers that they bear children against their will or in spite of serious economic want. For this reason, all women, without exception, had the right to interrupt a pregnancy during the first three months. The abortions were to take place in public obstetric hospitals. Only clandestine illicit abortions were to be punished. By this measure it was hoped that illegal abortion would come out into the open and would be taken out of the hands of the quacks. In the cities, this was largely successful; out in the country, women were less apt to give up their old ways. This showed again that abortion is not just a legal problem but has a great deal to do with the sexual anxiety of women. The secrecy and the embarrassment with which sexuality has been connected for thousands of years cause a woman from among the workers or peasants to go to a quack rather than to a hospital.

There was never any thought of making abortion a lasting social institution; the Soviets were clear in their own minds from the very beginning that the legalization of abortion was only one of the means of fighting quackery. The main goal was that of the *prevention of abortion* through thorough enlightenment about the use of contraceptives.

The stigma of the unwed mother soon disappeared. The in-

creasing participation of the woman in the process of production gave her a material independence and security which not only facilitated child-bearing to her, but made it seem more desirable. The women ceased working for two months previous to delivery and two months afterwards, while their pay continued. The factories and the farm collectives established nurseries with trained nurses who could take care of the children while the mothers were at work. If one saw these institutions for child care, one could no longer doubt the enormous progress in social hygiene. The women were relieved of heavy work in the early months of pregnancy. The time they took off for nursing was paid. The budget for maternal and infant care rose from year to year, almost in geometrical progression. Thus it is not surprising that the drop in birth rate, so much feared by the timid souls and the moralists, did not materialize; on the contrary, there was a considerable increase in the birth rate.

The government made every effort to penetrate even into the remotest districts of the enormous country; for example, special trains equipped with everything necessary for the institution of birth control went to the outlying provinces. The fact that it took about 10-12 years of hard work to reduce illegal abortion to a minimum shows the power of the sexual anxiety in the masses; it makes the acceptance of useful measures a slow and difficult process.

As always, the attempt to put into practice sex-hygienic measures ran into the reactionary attitude of the conventional social hygienists. As always, it was shown that the masses have a direct and instinctual grasp of these vital questions, while the "trained" social hygienist, with all his arguments "pro and con" behaves like the centipede who, when told that he had a hundred feet, found himself no longer able to walk. Let us see at what point of the abortion problem and by what means the reaction was able to get a foothold and finally to exert its inhibiting influence.

We can forego a historical and statistical presentation of the abortion problem; that has been given in many good books. We shall only try to comprehend the dynamics of the conflict be-

tween the forward-driving and the inhibiting elements. The ethical, more or less disguised religious argument not only persisted, but gradually gained more and more weight. As always, reactionary ethics can be recognized by their empty wordiness. From the very beginning, the sexual reaction fought the revolutionizing of the abortion problem partly with old arguments taken over from Tsarism, partly with new ones adapted to Sovietism, but no less reactionary arguments. It was said that "humanity would die out," "morality would collapse," that "the family had to be protected" and "the will to have children had to be supported." The main worry of the sexual reaction, as everywhere else, was the concern about a possible decline of the birth rate.<sup>1</sup>

Among these arguments one cannot distinguish those which are honest and those which, both subjectively and objectively, are nothing but empty excuses for not having to come to grips with the real problems of sexual life. The concern about the maintenance of morality, that is the non-fulfillment of sexual needs, is genuine in these people; so is their concern for the family.

On the other hand, the talk about depopulation and about the protection of unborn life is an excuse. These people forget that in nature everything multiplies infinitely, perhaps just because there are no population politicians. There can no longer be any

---

<sup>1</sup> *Translator's note:* This refers to the time of the Russian revolution. Since then, this irrational argument of the reaction has not changed in the least. Thus, General Henri Honoré Giraud writes about the collapse of France (LIFE, February 1, 1943): "What are the causes of this unforeseeable crash, unheard of in the history of France? First, the *primordial* question, that of birth rate. France, even without the war, was on the slope of suicide. The family was disappearing to give place to couples without children. In the world's richest country where the soil gives to anybody who wants to work it, the countryside was depopulating itself."

This antisexual argument leads in a straight line to fascism: . . . "What did the school teach these youngsters and these men? First, egoism, personal interest and the cult of envy. After that, negation of everything spiritual, of everything divine, of everything ideal. Atheism, if not proclaimed, was at least encouraged . . . If from youth, which formed only a small part of the Army, we pass to the entire nation, what were its characteristics? . . . Admittedly, the Germans do not *perhaps* (!) have liberty, but there is certainly *neither disorder nor anarchy*. Everywhere it is work, the only fortune for a people which wishes to live and live happily. May France remember it and profit by it." [Italics are mine.—T.P.W.]

doubt: Population politics as practiced today, as dishonest and vague as it is, is *a means of sexual negation, a means of diverting attention from the problems of establishing opportunities for sexual gratification.*

Obviously fascist tendencies were expressed in the attitudes of the very people whose first duty it would have been to pay less attention to the "State" and more to maternal health. Thus, for example, Dr. Koroliov, at the Congress in Kiev in 1932, summarized his views as follows:

Criminal abortion is a sign of *immorality* which finds support in the legalization of abortion.

Social abortion is often enough the wrong way out of the chaos of the *sexual problem* . . . It prevents motherhood and often decreases woman's success in public life. Therefore, it is alien to genuine communal living.

Abortion is a *mass means of destroying progeny.* Its intention is not that of helping the mother or society; it has nothing to do with the protection of maternal health.

In contrast to these coiners of phrases with their fascist mentality, there were sexologists and physicians who, without much theoretical knowledge, but simply from the correct instinct which they had acquired in practice, had the correct revolutionary concept. Thus, for example, Klara Bender who, at the Congress of the German Group of the International Criminological Association in 1932, courageously opposed the hypocrites who made the arguments of the reactionary population politicians in the S.U. their own.

This talk about the physical and emotional damage was nonsense, she said, if abortion was carried out under proper conditions. The argument about the decline of the birth rate, she said, was contradicted by statistics. The talk about woman's primordial instinct for the "child" was shown to be nonsense by the brutality with which women in reactionary countries were forced to bring up children under impossible conditions. In the conservative countries, she said, abortion was purely a matter of

finances, and the conservative abortion laws were driving women to the abortion quacks. On the other hand, in the Moscow Hospital for birth control, there had not been one death among the 50,000 abortions in one year.

One is again and again amazed by the ineffectiveness of such clear arguments. Witnessing the discussions about birth control and abortion in Germany, one could not help realizing that the reactionary population politicians and hygienists were not by any means operating with rational arguments. They always reminded one of the Nazis' discussions about the race theory. In that connection it had become unequivocally clear that one cannot deal with empty orators, impotent and vain professors by laboriously trying to demonstrate that the Germanic Nordic race is *not* the most superior one in the world or that a Negro baby is no less intelligent or charming than the offspring of a German Bürger.

If it were a matter of rational argumentation, then the revolutionary arguments would have long since done away with the ideology of the reactionary population politicians and the race theorists. But these groups had on their side irrational forces in mass thinking which cannot be handled by rational arguments alone. The reactionary population politicians are successful because women have an unconscious fear of genital injury. For this reason, millions of German women voted, against their own interest, against the abolition of the abortion paragraph. The same thing was shown in Denmark in 1934, when signatures were collected for a petition to abolish the abortion paragraph. The race theorists, on their part, can exist only because the German Bürger can compensate for his inferiority feeling when he is told that he belongs to the "leading," "most intelligent," "most creative" race, that is, the Nordic race.

The fact has to be stressed that such irrational formations as the race theory and modern eugenics cannot be beaten by rational arguments alone; the rational arguments have to be supported by a foundation of strong natural feelings. It is not a matter of "putting into effect" an armchair theory of sex-economy;

social living itself spontaneously discloses the facts which are described in sex-economic theory, once the sources of human life are allowed to flow again. It is not a matter of procreation, but, first of all, of safeguarding sexual happiness. The fact that the problem of birth control was discussed in the S.U. not in private associations or circles, but socially and officially, in a *positive* way, was in itself a tremendous step ahead. Only thus was it possible for a courageous and intelligent revolutionary like Zelinsky to say the following to the conservative authorities:

In the framework of the talks about the harmfulness of abortion at this Congress my statements will sound heretical. It is difficult to believe in the social honesty of those speakers who, turning their faces away from life and from facts, tell us abstract truths about abortion. There is an atmosphere here of social myopia or social hypocrisy. These people do not see, or do not want to see, those socio-economic and mass-psychological conditions under which the epidemic of abortion takes place. Their statements about abortion betray moralistic prejudice rather than objective evaluation. In connection with this problem, all kinds of horror stories have been spread. One has tried to scare us with everything imaginable: infection and perforation of the uterus, nervous disease, decline of the birth rate, extinction of the maternal instinct, operation in dark places, around corners, etc. Is not the introduction of a tube into the stomach, or even the duodenum, also operating in the dark? If all kinds of things are injected into veins, do you know exactly beforehand what the result will be? Is the connection between endocrine disturbances and abortion in any way proved? Why is it, then, that the city women who go through one abortion after the other, can still, at 30, successfully compete with their friends of 20 in physical beauty, while their country sisters, who conscientiously bear children, turn into walking corpses at 30, after having had 6 or 8 children? And who says that fewer births will always be harmful to beauty? The opposite may well be true. It is easier for the woman to stand abortions than to follow one little coffin after the other to the cemetery and to bury with them her youth and strength. Of course, there might be more children, but then there should be different social conditions. Look at life frankly, see in what socio-economic conditions women live and are compelled to have their

children. The family, with its short duration, does not guarantee to the women the conditions which are indispensable for a proper upbringing of their children. Alimony does not always serve the purpose. The man who is incapable of paying his alimony is of more theoretical interest to the lawyer than of practical interest to the woman. Contraceptives are often unreliable. The right of the woman to abortion cannot always be made use of, because many of the women are unemployed, while they can make use of this right if they have a monthly income of 40 to 50 rubles. You remember a passage in Zola where a clandestine abortionist says to the licensed physician: "You people push the women into prison or into the Seine, and we pull them out." Do you want that the "pulling out of the Seine" should again become the job of the criminal abortionists? One of the speakers here exclaimed in horror: "All that is needed is the certificate of the doctor and the desire of the woman, and there you have abortion." Yes, that is exactly the way it should be: the desire of the woman is sufficient, because the right to determine the social indications for abortion is the woman's and nobody else's. None among us men would tolerate it if some commission or other had the say about our marriage, if they, according to their social concepts, could consent to our getting married or veto it. So, don't keep the woman from deciding the cardinal question of her life for herself. The woman has a right to a sexual life and wants to realize it just as the man does, and if she is to be a full social and biological being, she must have the full possibilities of realizing it. There should not be a mass production of a class of spinsters who can only be detrimental to a program of collective living.

Zelinsky, with a correct instinct, made his stand just at the time when the sexual reaction started to hamper birth control and abortion again with commissions, decrees and humanitarian rationalizations. At this congress, then, there was a very serious struggle between the sex-affirmative and the sex-negating groups. Ten years after the legalization of abortion, the sexual reaction was still strong. Yefimov demanded a thorough study of contraceptives. At the same time, he complained that they were being publicly sold in the streets of Moscow without any medical control, which opened the door for speculation and fraud. Benders-



kaya and Shinka demanded free distribution of contraceptives; Belinsky, Shinka and Zelitsky demanded that they be distributed only on medical prescription, saying that uncontrolled distribution of contraceptives might be infinitely harmful from a population standpoint.

The question as to the best mode of distributing contraceptives remained unsolved. The "eugenic" concern was in reality the concern about the "moral" behavior of the population. The enjoyment of sexual pleasure seemed to be incompatible with the wish for children. Dr. Benderskaya, Kiev, e.g., advocated the following principles:

1. Making abortion again punishable would increase the criminal abortions performed by quacks.
2. Criminal abortion by quacks must be fought by legal abortion.
3. Legal abortion must be fought by birth control information.
4. In a Socialist social order, the woman will fulfill her function of motherhood according to the demands of the collective of which she is a member.

Point 4 immediately nullifies the first three. Points 1-3 pertain to sex-hygienic measures which would grant sexual freedom and enjoyment; then, in point 4, motherhood is subordinated to a moral demand, the "demands of the collective." What was overlooked was the role of the pleasure in the child. It will never be possible to force women to bear children for the sake of a power outside of them. Bearing children will either be part of the general enjoyment of life and will then rest on a firm foundation, or it will be a moral demand and remain, to the same extent, an unsolvable problem.

Why are the eugenic interests always at variance with the sexual interests of the people? Is this conflict unsolvable? As long as nations are hostile to each other; as long as they are separated by national and tariff boundaries; as long as there is an interest in competing with other nations in the numbers of available soldiers, *eugenics must needs be at variance with the demands of sexual hygiene*. Since one cannot openly state that

one needs an increase in population, one talks about "morality and procreation" and the "preservation of the race." *In reality, women's unwillingness to have children is only one of the expressions of the crisis in human sex life.* It is no pleasure to have children under poor living conditions and with unloved partners; more than that, the sexual life itself has become a torture. The eugenicists do not see this conflict; they are the executives of nationalistic interests. In spite of its basic socialism, the S.U. was unable, just because of this conflict, to develop a socialist population policy; it was constantly under the pressure of a threatening intervention. Not until the social causes of war are eliminated and society can turn to the task of building up the conditions for happy living, will the conflict between sexual happiness and population interests disappear; then only will the enjoyment in having children be part of the general enjoyment of sexuality. With that, the moral demand for procreation will become unnecessary.

The legalization of abortion contained—although only implicitly—the *affirmation of sexual pleasure*. This would have required a conscious changing of the whole sexual ideology from negative to positive, from sex-negation to sex-affirmation. According to the obstetricians at the before-mentioned Congress, 60-70% of the women were incapable of experiencing sexual pleasure. It was said that this lack of sexual potency was due, of all things, to abortion. This statement is contradicted by clinical experience; it is an attempt to obscure the problem of abortion and to justify its prohibition. This percentage of women is sexually disturbed with or without abortion, quite generally and everywhere. It happened that some women went through 15 abortions, many 2 or 3 times a year. This shows that the women are *afraid of using contraceptives*. Otherwise, they would of themselves see to the use of proper contraceptives. We know from our experience in the sex hygiene clinics in Germany that almost all women have this fear; we know that at the same time the problem of contraception is one of their most burning problems. The women must be freed from this fear. It is necessary to voice this burning, un-

acknowledged desire of theirs and to see to its fulfillment. The legalization of abortion alone does not create the positive desire for children. This presupposes, first of all, the establishment of the internal, that is, social, prerequisite for a happy love life. Instead of debating the mode of distribution of contraceptives, one should find out exactly which contraceptives are most likely to *guarantee sexual gratification*. What good is a pessary if the woman is afraid of it or has the uncomfortable sensation of a foreign body in her and thus cannot reach gratification? What good is a condom if it reduces gratification and thus creates neurasthenic complaints? What good is the best propaganda for contraception if there are insufficient facilities for manufacturing the *best* of contraceptives to supply everybody, at a price that everybody can afford? And what good do these facilities do if at the same time the women retain their fear of using contraceptives?

The resolution of this Congress still advocated legalized abortion; but at the same time it showed a general fear of really advocating sexual gratification. This atmosphere of fear was described in 1932 by Fanina Halle as follows:

The outside world has heard little about the protests of the older Bolsheviks, many of whom, it is true, went far beyond Lenin and almost preached ascetic ideals. Instead, there was all the more talk of the "socialization of the woman," particularly in connection with antisovietistic propaganda. In the meantime, the tide of interest in sexual problems has definitely receded, and the maturing Russian youth, the avant-garde of the revolution, find themselves confronted with such serious responsible tasks that the sexual problems become *unimportant*. In this manner, the relationships between the sexes in the S.U. have again reached a *stage of desexualization*, this time perhaps more thoroughgoing than ever before. The casualness of the relationships between man and woman which at first was characteristic of a small circle of revolutionary pioneers, has now become characteristic of the masses of people. The force which brought this about is the five-year-plan.

The Soviet ideology is proud of this "desexualization." But this

"desexualization" is a figment of phantasy. Sexuality does not disappear; it continues in pathological, distorted and harmful forms. The alternative of sexuality and sociality does not exist. The only alternative is: socially affirmed, satisfactory, happy sex life, or pathological, secretive, socially outlawed sex life. To the very extent to which the seeming desexualization—which is in reality the disturbance of natural sexuality—will make people in the S.U. sick and antisocial, to the same extent will the authorities see themselves forced to tighten moralistic laws, for example, to abolish legalized abortion. In an inexorable vicious circle, suppressed sexuality will call for moral pressure, and this in turn will increase the disturbance of sexuality. Professor Stroganov already complained that while previously the women were ashamed of abortion, they now "considered it their legal right." The directress of the organization for maternal health, Lebedeva, said that the legalization of abortion had "*unshackled* the psychology of the woman," that abortion had become a sort of "psychosis." Krivsky stated that this "psychosis" was progressing and one could not foresee when it would stop. The result of this "demoralization," he said, was that the maternal feeling of the woman was dulled. Some Soviet physicians came to the correct conclusion that economic want was *not* the dominant factor for the increase in abortions. This is quite logical; otherwise abortion would not be so frequent among women who suffer no economic want. In reality, abortion is a clear expression of the fact that people first of all want sexual enjoyment, before having children.

On the basis of this confusion, sexual freedom was indeed considerably restricted in the course of the second five-year-plan. For example, women could no longer interrupt a first pregnancy. It is impossible to say where this development will lead. It will not be decided by itself, but will be determined by the outcome of the struggle between sex-affirmative, sex-revolutionary tendencies on the one hand and sex-negating, sex-reactionary tendencies on the other. It is to be feared that the sex-revolutionary tendencies will not be able to gather sufficient momentum to prevail against the old concepts. The result will be a splen-

didly organized economy, run by neurasthenics and living machines, but *not* socialism.

Let us summarize the lessons from this struggle in order to be better prepared if society again is confronted with the task of building a rational way of living. The following are indispensable prerequisites for such a task:

1. The *elimination of all alibis and dishonest explanations*, such as the concern about the preservation of the race or the explanation that economic want is the sole reason for abortion. The elimination of the separation of eugenics from sexual policy in general.

2. *Recognition of the sexual function as independent from procreation.*

3. *Recognition of the will to procreation as a part of the function of sexuality*, of the desire for a child as part of the general enjoyment of life. Recognition of the fact that, if the conditions are given for a satisfactory material and sexual life, the enjoyment of the child is a matter of course.

4. Open advocacy of the fact that *contraception* serves not only the elimination of abortion, but, first of all, sexual pleasure and health.

5. The courage to stand for *sex-affirmation* and sexual *self-regulation*.

6. Safeguarding against the *practical influence* of saints, moralists and all other kinds of disguised sexual neurotics.

7. Strictest control of the practices and ideology of the reactionary professors of obstetrics and social hygiene by sex-hygienic organizations of women and of youth. Eradication of the stupid respect of the masses for the science of today which rarely deserves this name.

The goal of rational population politics can be only that of arousing the interest of the population themselves, instead of imposing on them, from above, the duty of "preserving the race." The first prerequisite for reaching this goal is the affirmation of sexual pleasure and its safeguarding for all those who take a *productive* part in social life. The population must come to feel

that they are absolutely and correctly understood in this one point, the problem of sexual pleasure, and that society is willing to do everything possible to safeguard it and to enable them to enjoy it.

The solution of these problems will prove relatively simple compared to the main problem: *How can the orgasm anxiety of the people of today be eliminated on a mass scale?* This is a gigantic problem. Once this problem is solved, the problem of population politics will no longer be in the hands of sex-neurotic academicians, but of youth, of workers, farmers and scientific specialists. Until then, population politics and eugenics will remain the reactionary formations which they are today.

#### THE REINTRODUCTION OF THE HOMOSEXUALITY PARAGRAPH

Soviet sexual legislation had simply scrapped the old Tsarist homosexuality paragraph which penalized homosexuality with long-term imprisonment. The presentation of homosexuality in the great Soviet Encyclopedia was based on Magnus Hirschfeld and partly on Freud. The reason given for the abolition of the homosexuality paragraph was that the problem of homosexuality was exclusively a scientific one and that consequently, homosexuals should not be punished. It was necessary, it was said, to take down the walls which separated the homosexuals from the rest of society. This achievement of the Soviet government gave the sex-political movement in Western Europe and America a great impetus. It was, indeed, not just a propagandistic measure, but it was based on the fact that homosexuality, whether it is considered congenital or acquired, is an activity which does nobody any harm. This was also the general feeling among the population. People in general were very tolerant in sexual matters, even though, as one reporter states, homosexuals and lesbians were occasionally "made fun of in a kindly way." In contrast, conservative people, as everywhere, were still under the influence of ascetic ideologies and medieval prejudices. This class also had its representatives in the middle and higher strata of the party, so that its influence made itself gradually felt among the workers

also. Gradually, two concepts of homosexuality crystallized themselves more and more:

1. Homosexuality is a "sign of a barbaric lack of culture," an indecency of half-primitive Eastern peoples;

2. Homosexuality is a "sign of a degenerate culture of the perverse bourgeoisie."

Such views, together with the general lack of clarity concerning sexual problems, led to occasionally grotesque cases of persecution of homosexuals; as time went on, they became more and more frequent. After all, the law abolishing punishment could not alone solve the problem. According to sex-economic knowledge, homosexuality is, in the vast majority of cases, a result of a very early inhibition of heterosexual love. With the general inhibition of the sexual revolution, therefore, a steady increase of homosexuality among the youth, especially in the army and navy, was inevitable. There was spying and denunciation, ostracism on the part of party committees and even "party purges." In individual cases, old Bolsheviks like Klara Zetkin intervened and achieved acquittal. But gradually, as a result of the unsolved condition of the sexual problem in general, the wave of homosexuality increased, until in January, 1934, there were mass arrests of homosexuals in Moscow, Leningrad, Kharkov and Odessa. These arrests were being justified on political grounds. Among the arrested there were a great many actors, musicians and other artists who, for alleged "homosexual orgies," were punished with several years of imprisonment or exile.

In March, 1934, there appeared the law which prohibits and punishes sexual intercourse between men. It was signed by Kalinin and was apparently an emergency measure since amendments to the existing laws could only be passed by the Soviet Congress. This law designated sexual intercourse between men as a "social crime" to be punished, in lighter cases, with imprisonment of from 3 to 5 years, and in the case of dependence of one partner on the other with 5 to 8 years. Thus homosexuality was again put in the same category as other social crimes: banditism, counterrevolutionary activities, sabotage, espionage, etc. The

persecutions of homosexuals had a connection with the Röhm affair in Germany between 1932 and 1933. The Soviet press had started a campaign against homosexuality as a sign of "degeneracy of the fascist bourgeoisie." The well-known Soviet journalist Koltsov had written a series of articles in which he spoke of the "fairies of Goebbels' propaganda ministry" and of the "sexual orgies in fascist countries." An article by Gorky on "Proletarian humanism" had a decisive influence. He wrote: "One revolts at even mentioning the horrors which fascism brings to such a rich flowering." What he meant was antisemitism and homosexuality. He continued: "In the fascist countries, homosexuality, which ruins youth, flourishes without punishment; in the country where the proletariat has audaciously achieved social power, homosexuality has been declared a social crime and is heavily punished. There is already a slogan in Germany, 'Eradicate the homosexual and fascism will disappear.'"

It can be seen how confused and harmful these concepts of homosexuality were. People failed to distinguish the *Männerbund* homosexuality which, in fact, was at the basis of Röhm's as well as other organizations, from the emergency homosexuality among soldiers, sailors and prisoners which was due to the lack of heterosexual opportunities. They overlooked, in addition, the fascist ideology with regard to homosexuality, which was also negative; one only has to remember June 30, 1934, when Hitler eradicated the whole leadership of the SA with the same argument which was used in the beginning of the persecution of homosexuals in the S.U. Clearly, such chaotic concepts regarding the relationship of sexuality and fascism and regarding the general problems of sexuality can lead nowhere. The mass arrests of homosexuals led to a panic among the homosexuals in the S.U.; it is said that there were numerous suicides in the army. Up to 1934, there was no atmosphere of denunciation in the S.U., but after these occurrences, it developed again. The general population, on the other hand, had a tolerant attitude toward the homosexuals.

I shall limit myself to this brief presentation. The connection



between the persecution of homosexuals and the general sex-political situation, especially of the Eastern peoples, would require an extensive presentation which cannot be given here. The sex-economic concepts of homosexuality are presented in my earlier books, *DIE FUNKTION DES ORGASMUS*, *CHARAKTER-ANALYSE*, and *DER SEXUELLE KAMPF DER JUGEND*. In summary, one can say the following:

1. Homosexuality among adults is not a social crime, it does no harm to anybody.
2. It can be reduced only by establishing all necessary prerequisites for a natural love life among the masses.
3. Until this goal can be achieved, it must be considered a mode of sexual gratification alongside the heterosexual one and should (with the exception of the seduction of adolescents and children) not be punished.

## CHAPTER XII

### THE INHIBITION IN THE YOUTH COMMUNES

Russian youth, in the first years of the civil war, immediately obtained the predominant role which belongs to it. Lenin had fully realized the significance of youth's will for life and had from the beginning paid particular attention to their organization and the improvement of their economic position. The recognition of the independence of youth was fully expressed in the resolution passed at the Second Congress of the Youth Organizations: "The Komsomol is an autonomous organization with its own constitution." As early as 1916, Lenin had pointed out: "Without complete independence, youth cannot produce any useful socialists."

Only an independent youth, acting without authoritarian discipline, and a sexually healthy youth could, in the long run, master the extremely difficult tasks of the revolution. The following may serve as an illustration of the sex-political character of independent revolutionary youth organizations:

#### 1. REVOLUTIONARY YOUTH

Until about 10 years ago, Baku belonged to the most reactionary parts of all Russia. True, the revolution had changed the laws, had changed economics, and religion had been declared a matter of personal choice. But, according to Balder Olden, "under the new roofs there was still the old, cruel morality of the harem." The girls were sent to religious institutions; they were not allowed to learn to read and write, lest they establish contact with the outer world, escape and bring dishonor to their families. That is, the girls were their father's serfs. At sexual maturity, they became

their husband's serfs; they could not choose their own husbands, they did not even see them before their marriage. Girls as well as women had to wear veils, were not allowed to show their faces to any man. If they were allowed to go anywhere, it was only under guard; they were not allowed to take on work, to read a book or a newspaper. Theoretically they had the right to get divorced, practically they could not do it. True, the cat-o'-nine-tails had disappeared from the prisons, but the women were still being beaten. They had to have their children unaided, for there were no midwives or female physicians; to show themselves to a male physician was prohibited by religion.

Then, around the middle of the 'twenties, Russian women founded a central Women's Club which organized education. Gradually, education spread; more and more girls listened to the white-haired teachers (young men were not allowed to teach them). Thus, many years after the social revolution, there set in a "revolution of the mores." The girls learned for the first time that there were countries where girls and boys were educated together, where women engaged in sports, went to the theater and to meetings without a veil and generally took a part in contemporary living.

This sex-political movement spread. When the family fathers, the brothers and husbands heard what was being proclaimed in this club, they felt their interests threatened. They spread the rumor that the club was a house of ill fame. After that, it became perilous for the women to visit the club. According to Olden, it happened that girls on their way to the club had boiling water poured on them and dogs loosed at them. More than that, as late as 1923 a girl was threatened with death when she appeared in public or wore a sport dress which revealed her arms and legs. Under such conditions it is understandable that even the most courageous women could not even think of a love relationship outside of marriage. In spite of all this, there were some girls who resolutely took up the fight for the sexual liberation of female youth. They were made to suffer incredibly. Of course, they were immediately recognized, were ostracized and considered worse

than prostitutes, so that none of them could ever count on getting married.

In 1928, a 20-year-old girl, Zarial Haliliva, escaped from her parental home and began to call meetings for the sexual emancipation of women; she went unveiled to the theater and wore a bathing costume on the beach. Her father and her brothers sat in judgment over her, condemned her to death and cut her up alive. This was in 1928, eleven years after the social revolution in Russia. Her murder gave the sex-political movement among women an enormous impetus. Her body was taken from the parents, put in state at the club with an honor guard of boys and girls. Women and girls came to the club in masses. Her murderers were executed, and it is said that from that time on fathers and brothers no longer dared to take similar measures against the emancipation of women and youth.

Olden describes these happenings as a cultural revolution in general. More correctly, it was a definitely *sexual* revolution which only secondarily led to a cultural consciousness among girls and women. In 1933 there were already 1,044 girls enrolled in universities, there were 300 midwives and 150 women's and girls' clubs. They produced many authors and journalists; the president of the highest court is a woman. The women have positions as engineers, physicians and flyers. Revolutionary youth had obtained their right to live.

## 2. YOUTH COMMUNES

The youth communes demonstrate particularly well the role of the sexual revolution of youth. They were the first natural expression of a developing collective life of youth. A commune formed by older people immediately runs into the difficulties presented by rigid reactions and habits. In youth, on the other hand, particularly in puberty, everything is in flux, and the inhibitions have not as yet become rigid structure. Thus the youth communes seemed predestined to success and to be able to demonstrate the progress represented by collective living. How

much of a revolutionary life, then, established itself in the communes? And what factors inhibited this progress?

Very early, the fact was recognized that the political organization of youth and the care for their economic security were the first tasks. But it was also realized that that was not sufficient. Bucharin tried to summarize the main task in the formula, "Youth needs romance." This concept seemed to become necessary when the proletarian youth movement lost its impetus after the civil war was over and the revolutionary events of those years gave way to the less romantic and more laborious tasks of reconstruction. "We cannot appeal to the brain alone. For before people understand a thing, they must feel it," they said at the fifth congress of the Komsomol. "All the romantic material of the revolution must be utilized in the education of youth: the underground work before the revolution, the civil war, the Cheka, the fights and revolutionary deeds of the workers and the Red Army, inventions and expeditions." Chiefly, they said, a literature had to be created in which the socialist ideal was presented in an "inspiring form"; in which the human struggle with nature, the heroism of the workers and the unconditional surrender to communism was glorified. In other words, the enthusiasm of youth was to be aroused and maintained with the aid of *ethical* ideals. Reactionary ideals and ideas were to be replaced by revolutionary ones.

In concrete terms, this means the following: Conservative youth likes to read detective stories because of their sensationalism. Now, it is entirely possible to replace a detective story with a conservative content by one with a revolutionary content; for example, instead of a criminal being pursued by a detective it is a White spy pursued by an O.G.P.U. man. But the experience of the youthful reader remains exactly the same: horror, curiosity and tension; the result is sadistic phantasies which attach themselves to the dammed-up, unreleased sexual energy. The formation of psychic structure *does not depend on the content but on the quality of the accompanying vegetative excitations*. A horror story has

the same effect whether it deals with Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves or with the execution of White spies. The important thing to the reader is the goose-flesh and not whether it is 40 thieves or 40 counterrevolutionaries who get decapitated.

If the revolutionary movement had as its goal nothing but that of imposing its views and of attracting people to it, then replacing one ethical ideal with another would indeed be sufficient. If, however, in addition, it had as its goal that of changing human structure, *of making people capable of independent thought and action*, of eradicating the serf structure, then it should have remembered that it was not sufficient simply to replace the conservative Sherlock Holmes by a Red Sherlock Holmes or to try to surpass conservative romanticism with revolutionary romanticism. In the resolutions of the fifth Congress it was said that "demonstrations, torchlight processions, flags and mass concerts must be used to the greatest possible extent to influence youth." While this may have been necessary, it was, nevertheless, only the renewed use of *old* forms of enthusiasm and ideological influencing. The same thing was done successfully in Hitler Germany. The Hitler youth certainly does not show less enthusiasm and surrender to the cause than the Komsomol. The decisive difference was this: Hitler youth swears blind and unconditional allegiance to a God-like Führer; the thought of creating a life of their own, with its own laws, would never enter their minds. The task of the Komsomol, on the other hand, was just that of creating a new life for all working youth, a life in accordance with their own needs; to make them independent, anti-authoritarian, capable of enjoying work and capable of sexual gratification, capable of embracing a cause not out of blind obedience but out of their own decision. They had to know that they were not fighting for some abstract Communist "ideal," but that the Communist goal *was the realization of their own, independent lives*. What characterizes authoritarian society is that its youth has no consciousness of their own lives; thus, they either vegetate dully or surrender *blindly*. Revolutionary youth, on the other hand, develops, out of the consciousness of their needs, the most powerful and

most sustained enthusiasm: the *joy of life*. To be "youthful" and to be "independent" means affirming sexuality. The Soviet State had to decide whether it wanted to base its power on ascetic self-sacrifice or on sex-affirmative joy of life. The youthful masses, in the long run, could be won and their structure could be changed in the sense of socialism only with the aid of the affirmation of life.

The Komsomol comprised one million members in 1925, two in 1927, five in 1931, and almost six million in 1932. The organization of the workers' youth was also successful. Was the structure of these youths changed in the sense of "complete independence" as postulated by the resolutions of the second Congress? At the same time, hardly 15% of the farmer youths belonged to the Komsomol. Of 500,000 young farmers of Komsomol age who lived in agricultural communes and could have been reached very easily, only 25% belonged. Why were the other 75% not organized? The extent to which youth can be reached is in direct proportion to the extent to which youth organizations understand the sexual and material needs of youth, to the extent to which they voice these needs for youth and do everything possible to fulfill them. New forms of living arise only out of the *new* contents of life, and new contents must take new forms. Among the agricultural youth, the change in structure will take different forms than among the workers' youth, according to the differences in their ways of sexual living.

*a) The commune Sorokin.*

In the course of the revolutionary changes certain social formations developed which, though characteristic of this period of transition, cannot be considered the germs of a future communist order. Let us examine these characteristics in the case of the famous "commune Sorokin."

It is the prototype of a commune with an authoritarian, anti-feminist, *not* specifically communistic commune, based on homosexual attachments.

Sorokin was a young worker in a steam mill in the Northern

Caucasus. He read about the construction of "Avtostroy," the large Soviet automobile factory. He decided to work there. He went to the nearest town, attended technical courses and organized a group among the students. At the close of the course, all of the 22 graduates, fired by Sorokin's enthusiasm, went to Avtostroy, where they arrived on May 18, 1930. These 22 young workers, under Sorokin, formed a work commune. They all paid their wages into a common fund from which all expenses were paid. It was an outspoken youth commune, none of the members being older than 22. Eighteen belonged to the Komsomol, one to the party, two had no affiliation.

Their youthful enthusiasm, their ambition and indefatigability soon got on other workers' nerves. The director also made things hard for them, placing them here and there, instead of letting them all work in one place, as they wanted. Sorokin succeeded in having the director replaced. His successor had more understanding for the commune. Immediately, they applied for a particularly difficult project, the draining of a marsh, where the schedule was 70% behind. Four of the communards, among them the only woman of the commune, gave up because the work was too hard. The other 18 worked like mad. They observed the strictest discipline. They had decided to exclude from the commune any member who should miss more than two hours' work. One communard, who actually did so, was ruthlessly excluded, though they all liked him.

Soon the work was 100% ahead of schedule. The fame of the commune Sorokin spread to the farthest corners of the establishment. Now they were systematically assigned to all the tough spots. Everywhere they inspired the other workers. Sometimes they worked 20 hours a day. They procured two tents where they lived together. Thus they developed a full commune. Their example was soon followed. When Sorokin and his comrades arrived, there had been 68 pioneer brigades with 1,691 members (udarniki); they had been the only commune. Half a year later, there were 253 brigades, among them 7 communes. A year later,



there were 339 brigades with 7,023 udarniki, and 13 communes. Sorokin was decorated with the order of the Red Flag.

These communards remind one of the collectivistic groups of many Red Front divisions in Germany. The exclusion of women alone characterizes them as *not* characteristic of the work-democratic collective of the future. Their structure is alien to the average person. The demands they made on themselves are undoubtedly heroic and necessary during the hard struggles of the transition period, but they do not point any way to the future. One has to distinguish whether a commune owes its existence to dire necessity and the getting used to each other or whether it develops out of natural vital needs. The development of many communes in the S.U. is characterized just by this element of transition; common work and common difficulties in factory or army was their basis. The primitive way of living obliterated individual differences. The work collectives developed into a full collective when collective living was added to it. But such a collective is as yet not a real commune, because only part of the wages go into the common fund. The full commune was considered the "highest form of living." The development of this full commune showed that the neglect of structural and personal problems led to a compulsive and authoritarian form of organization. The following is a good example:

There was a full commune at the State Library in Moscow, where they had clothes, shoes and even underwear in common. If one of the communards wanted to wear his own overcoat or underwear, this was condemned as "petit-bourgeois." There was no personal life. It was prohibited to have a closer relationship with one communard than with all the others. Love was outlawed. When it was found that a girl had taken a liking to a certain communard, both were attacked as "destroyers of communist ethics." The commune soon disintegrated.

If one affirms the commune as the "family form" of the future, the future unit of social living, it is important to study and understand the failure of such communes. Anything which is at

variance with natural human needs, any kind of authoritarian, moralistic or ethical rule will of necessity destroy the commune. The basic problem is how a commune can develop on the basis of natural instead of moral conditions. The conflict between human structure and forms of living sometimes led to grotesque phenomena. Some communes went as far as regulating, to the minute, the time of their members. The commune of the factory AMO produced the following statistics concerning the average use of the communards' time:

1. Factory work	6 hrs. 31 min.
2. Sleep	7 hrs. 35 min.
3. Study	3 hrs. 1 min.
4. Eating	1 hr. 24 min.
5. Political activities	53 min.
6. Reading	51 min.
7. Amusements (movies, club, walks, etc.)	57 min.
8. Housework	27 min.
9. Visiting	25 min.
10. Hygiene	24 min.
11. Not ascertainable	1 hr. 32 min.
	<hr/> 24 hrs. 00 min.

This is compulsion-neurotic. Such phenomena are definitely pathological, they are compulsion-neurotic signs of an existence of duty against which everything in the communards must have revolted. The conclusion to be drawn from such things is not that drawn by Mehnert,<sup>1</sup> that a collectivistic living is not possible, but that a way of collectivistic living must be found which is compatible with the structure of people. As long as the structure, the thinking and feeling of the communards, is at variance with the collective, social necessity will prevail in the form of conscience and compulsion. It is a matter of bridging the gap between structure and forms of living, not by compulsion, but in an organic manner.

---

<sup>1</sup> Mehnert, Klaus: *DIE JUGEND IN SOWJETRUSSLAND*. Berlin: S. Fischer Verlag, 1932.

*b) The work commune Bolshevo for delinquents.*

This was the first work commune, established in 1924, for delinquent adolescents at the recommendation of Dzerjinsky, chief of the O.G.P.U., on the principle that criminals should be managed in an entirely free manner. The problem was how to organize them. Two of the founders of the commune had a talk with the inmates of the Butyrki prison in Moscow. They were adolescents imprisoned for robbery, theft, vagrancy, etc. The proposition of the O.G.P.U. was the following: We shall give you freedom, the chance for education and for collaboration in the building up of the S.U. Do you want to come along and found a commune? The prisoners were distrustful. They could not believe that the O.G.P.U., who had arrested them, now were going to give them freedom. They suspected a ruse and refused at first. As it turned out later, they decided to go and look the thing over, and then to escape and continue their criminal career. Finally, 15 of them tried it. Then they started setting up lists of other boys for whom they vouchsafed and sent delegations to the prisons to get them. Their number finally increased to 1,000.

As to work, it was decided to operate a shoe factory for the population in the vicinity. The boys organized everything themselves. They established communes for work, household and education. Wages started at 12 rubles. The population protested violently against this commune of delinquents; they were afraid and sent petitions to the government in order to prevent it. Gradually, this changed. There was a club and a theater, to which the peasants also came, and in the course of a few years the relationship between the delinquents and the population became so good that the boys were able to establish sexual relationships with the girls from the surrounding villages and towns.

The work expanded, so that by 1929 there was a daily output of 400 pairs of shoes and 1,000 pairs of skates, in addition to clothes. Wages ranged from 18 rubles for newcomers to 130 rubles for older members. The workers paid from 34 to 50 rubles for board and clothes. 2% of the wages were deducted for the educational program. The newcomers were given credit until

they earned full wages. There was the same system of self-government as in all Soviet factories.

While in the beginning the delinquents had been afraid of entering the commune, gradually the applications became so numerous that the commune established an entrance examination in which the applicant had to prove that he really was a delinquent, that he had been arrested and imprisoned, etc.

Gradually, a library was developed, a chess club, an art gallery and a movie theater. All these were run by the communards themselves. There also were so-called conflict commissions. If someone missed work or was late, he was publicly reprimanded; on second offense, there was a deduction from his wages. In the most severe cases, the offender was condemned to 1 or 2 days' arrest. He was given the address of a prison in Moscow, would proceed there without any guard, finish his sentence and come back.

In the course of the first 3 years, there were, in addition to 320 boys, 30 girls. There were no appreciable sexual difficulties because the boys had relationships with girls in the environs. The leader of the commune told me that the communards discussed sexual difficulties among each other and that excesses occurred only very rarely. Sexual life regulated itself because there were possibilities for full sexual gratification.

The commune "Bolshevo" is the prototype of an education of youthful criminals based on the principle of self-government and of changing their structure so that it becomes non-authoritarian. Unfortunately, such communes remained isolated instances, and in the succeeding years the principle was given up, as shown in the reports which came in 1935. It should not be forgotten that in 1935 the general regression to authoritarian methods had already gone very far.

*c) Youth in search of new forms of living.*

At the same time as, with the aid of the NEP (New Economic Policy), economy was reconstructed, the establishment of private communes played a large role. Youth was supposed to put the

communist form of communal living into practice in collective homes. Mehnert reports that later on these attempts again receded into the background. "One has become more sober," he writes in 1932. "One admits openly that there is little sense in anticipating the final stage of socialism, communism, in the form of small islands, at a time when the whole country is still in the stage of liquidating the NEP and in the very first stages of socialism. The establishment of communes was more an emergency measure which is no longer needed today." This explanation is unsatisfactory. It may be that in the middle 'twenties the establishment of youth communes was premature. The question is, why did they fail? The Soviet development, to this day, is characterized by a severe struggle between the new forms of living and the old. The outcome of this struggle will determine the outcome of the Russian revolution. The problem of the youth communes is only a sector of the whole problem. It cannot be said that their establishment was an "emergency measure." Much more likely, this highly important step of youth failed, for as yet unintelligible reasons. Evidently, the new could not prevail against the old. Nevertheless, the assertion is already being made that socialism in the S.U. is a "definitely established fact."

Let us look at excerpts from the diary of a commune, as given by Mehnert:

It was in the winter of 1924. It was a time of bitter need, particularly in the large cities like Moscow. The common experience of hunger, deprivation and lack of housing brought people close to each other. Some friends who were about to graduate from school, finding it impossible to return again to individual families, decided to stay together in the form of another kind of family, and to found a commune. After a long search, some rooms were found in the second story of an old house. On the first floor there was a Chinese laundry, and there was steam coming up through the cracks except between 2 and 6 in the morning when the laundry stopped working. But that did not matter. One was glad to have a roof over one's head.

They moved in in April, 1925. The apartment consisted of two

bedrooms, a living room, called "the club," and a kitchen; the furniture consisted of cots, two tables and two benches. Ten people, five girls and five young men, were to build a new life here.

The communards were soon so busy with their work outside that they neglected the household. Soon, the diary reports the following:

October 28. The house detail has overslept. No breakfast. Commune was not cleaned. After supper, the dishes were not washed (incidentally, water is scarce).

October 29. Again no breakfast. No supper either. Dishes still not washed. Pantry and bathroom not cleaned. There is a thick layer of dust everywhere. The door remained unlocked, in two rooms the light was kept on. At two in the morning, our photo amateur, in defiance of regulations, developed his pictures. The drain is clogged. The pantry is a mess. The communards are apathetic, quiet, and a few even content. Can we build a new life like this?

A few days later the engagement of a housekeeper was debated. Was that not exploitation? After a long debate, they arrived at the following conclusion: "Everybody is forced all the time to use the services of others for pay: he sends his things to the laundry, has a charwoman come in, etc. A housekeeper only combines all these services in one person." Thus the housekeeper Akulina was introduced into the commune, and with her a certain amount of order and cleanliness.

Nevertheless, the diary of the first year shows a dark picture. "The pressure of the difficult times has created nervousness and irritability." Four members have left: one girl because, as she said, she was ruining her health in the commune; another because, as she said, one of the boys was intolerable; a third one married and went to live with her husband; a young man was expelled because he had kept back part of his income. This left two girls and four boys. During the summer, new members brought the number again to 11, five girls and six boys, all be-

tween 22 and 23 years old, most of them students. Of the original 10 founders there were only four left.

Every problem, even the smallest one, was discussed in meetings of the whole commune. There was a "commission" for every aspect of daily living: finance commission, clothes commission, hygiene commission which was responsible for health questions and for providing soap and toothpaste, etc. As far as its organization was concerned, then, the commune took over the form of state government, i.e., government by "commissions."

But there were other, more fundamental difficulties, which were not due to immediate material want, but to structural sexual anxiety. On the surface it appeared as if "egoism," "individualism" and "petit-bourgeois habits" were interfering with the collectivistic spirit of the commune. These "bad old habits" one tried to eradicate by a moral discipline. One set an ideal, a moral principle of the "collective life" against "egoism." That is, one tried to build up an organization, the principle of which was supposed to be self-government and voluntary, inner discipline, with the aid of moralistic, even authoritarian measures. Whence came this lack of inner discipline? Could a commune, in the long run, withstand the *conflict between the principle of self-government and authoritarian discipline*?

Self-government of a commune presupposes psychic health; this in turn presupposes all the inner and external conditions of a gratifying love life. The conflict between self-government and authoritarian discipline was rooted in the conflict between the desire for collective living and the psychic structure which was not capable of it: *they failed when it came to regulate the conditions of sexual living*. The collective was supposed to give a *new home* to the youth who were tired of the parental home and of life in the family. But these youths had, at the same time, an *aversion* to the family and a *longing* for it. The little everyday problems of housekeeping, etc., became unsolvable only by the confusion of the sexual relationships. At first, the communards made correct demands. They said the relationships had to be "companionable" although it never became quite clear what was

meant by that. They pointed out that the commune was no monastery and the communards no ascetics. The constitution of the commune even contained the following sentences:

"We feel that there should be no restrictions put on sexual relationships. There has to be frankness in sexual matters; we must have a conscious and serious attitude toward them. Otherwise, there will be the desire for secrecy and dark corners, flirting and other undesirable manifestations." In these few sentences, the communards grasped intuitively a basic principle of sex-economy: restriction of sexual relationships leads to clandestine and distorted sexuality. Were the communards brought up in such a manner, were they so conscious of their sexuality, so healthy that they could live according to this sex-economically correct collectivistic principle? They were not.

It soon became clear that the difficult problem of human structure could not be solved with words and moral demands. It became obvious that the desire on the part of a couple to be alone, to want to be undisturbed in their love, was by no means a lack of "companionable" attitude. The commune was confronted with the problem of youth in all countries and all social strata: *the lack of a room of one's own*. Every room was crowded with people. Where could there be an undisturbed love life? In founding the commune, nobody had thought of the multitude of problems which would be presented by the fact of sexual living together. These realities could not be handled by any regulation or moral discipline. Nevertheless, an amendment to the constitution was passed which was to eliminate this problem at one stroke: "*Sexual relationships among the communards during the first few years of the commune are undesirable.*"

The diary contends that for two years this principle was put into practice. According to what we know of youthful sexuality, we consider this absolutely impossible. Undoubtedly, the sexual relationships took place clandestinely, invisible to the eye of the "commission." This reintroduced a part of the old reactionary world. The first and correct principle of the commune, that of being frank and above-board in sexual matters, had been broken.



d) *The insoluble conflict between family and commune.*

The difficulties of commune life were not a matter of whether only the girls or also the boys should darn stockings; basically, it was a question of sexual living. This is shown in the partly new and revolutionary and partly tense and apprehensive manner in which they tried to solve their sexual problems. The final result of these struggles was: *family and commune are incompatible organizations.*

Early in 1928 this difficulty presented itself in an acute form. The communard Vladimir asked for a meeting, and the following discussion took place:

VLADIMIR: Katja and I have decided to get married. We want to live in the commune, because we cannot imagine a life outside of it.

KATJA: I wish to be made a member of the commune.

SEMION: In what capacity does Katja wish to be made a member? As Vladimir's wife or simply as Katja? Everything depends on that.

KATJA: I have had the intention of becoming a member for a long time. I know the commune and want to belong to it.

SERGEY: I am for it. If Katja had applied independently of the marriage with Vladimir, I would have thought twice. But this way it is not only a matter of Katja, but of one of our communards; let's not forget that.

LETIA: I am against having to take in anybody just because he or she is a marriage partner. First we have to consider *whether the family which thus is founded fits into the commune*. True enough, Katja is particularly qualified for this experiment, because, according to her nature, she will fit into the life of the commune.

MISHA: The commune is in a crisis. *A marriage would constitute a group formation within the commune, and would further impair the unity of the commune.* Therefore, I am against Katja's membership.

LETIA: If we don't accept Katja, we will lose Vladimir. We have already practically lost him, he is hardly ever at home. I am for it.

KATJA: I wish you to consider my case without any "alleviating circumstances"; I wish to become a regular member of the commune and not just the wife of a communard.

Resolution: Katja is accepted as a member.

A new cot was put into the girls' bedroom. Neither in the diary nor in Mehnert's presentation are there any concrete data as to how the sexual life of the young communards took place. The problem of the marriage of a communard was theoretically solved, but the difficulties appeared only afterwards. After long debates it was found that in view of the crowded conditions and the lack of money, children were not desired. Children would deprive the students of any possibility of working at home. The diary contains the following sentences: "Marriage in the commune is possible and permitted. However, in view of the existing housing conditions, the marriage must remain without offspring. Abortion is not allowed."

These three sentences contain more of the problems of the historic revolution in the S.U. than thousands of pages of formalistic reports:

1. *Marriage in the commune is possible and permitted.* In other words, one had doubted whether it would be possible, and finally had permitted it; after all, one could not prohibit a love relationship. Nobody thought of the fact that one did not have to contract a "marriage" in order to maintain a love relationship, because in the official Soviet ideology the term marriage covered *every* kind of sexual relationship. No distinction was made between a relationship which contained the wish for children and a relationship which was based only on the need for love. Neither was a distinction made between a temporary relationship and a permanent one; one did not think of the possible end of a short relationship or the gradual development of a permanent one.

2. *In view of the existing housing conditions, the marriage must remain without offspring.* On the one hand, the communards realized the possibility of entering a marriage without children for whom there would be no space. But the most immediate

problem was *where* sexual intercourse could take place. In the German revolutionary youth movement the problem had sometimes been solved by the expedient that youths who had rooms of their own would put them at the disposal of their comrades. As necessary as such a measure was, no official party would have dared to advocate it officially as an emergency measure.

3. *Abortion is not allowed.* This sentence expresses the conservative tendency of admitting of a love relationship but not of abortion; the practical solution was abstinence. The correct resolution would have been: "Since for reasons of space we cannot allow children for the time being, you cannot have children. If you want to be together, use contraceptives and tell us when you want to be undisturbed."

The discussion after this resolution showed how helplessly confused the communards were in not distinguishing procreation and sexual gratification. Many communards protested, pointing out that it was an unwarranted interference with nature, that it was confused and harmful to health. When a year later it became possible to acquire larger housing facilities for the commune, the resolution was replaced by a new one: "The commune allows the birth of children." Again, the problem of undisturbed sexual intercourse was not touched. What was truly revolutionary was the attitude that children of communards would be considered the children of the commune and would be brought up at its expense.

Here, the conflict became obvious. Clearly, the commune was a new form of the "family," a collective of people who were not blood relatives, which was to replace the old form of the family. True, the collective owed its existence to the protest against the restrictions of the family, but at the same time also to the desire to live in a family-like community. That is, one created a new kind of family, at the same time maintaining, within it, the old family form. There was a great deal of confusion. The communards passed the following resolution: "If one of the communards wants to get married, the commune shall not hinder him. On the contrary, the commune should do everything possible to create the conditions necessary for a family life."

The conflict between family and collective showed itself, concretely, in questions like the following: What if a communard wants to marry a girl outside of the commune, a girl that does not fit into the commune? Must she be accepted by the commune or not? What if this girl does not want to join the commune? In that case, should the husband and wife live apart? In this way, one question led to another. What the communards did not know was the following:

1. That there was a *conflict* between the *new form of the commune* and the *old structure of the communards*;

2. That the commune is *incompatible with the old form of marriage and family*;

3. That it was necessary to bring about an *alteration in the structure of people living in a commune*, and *how* this could be brought about.

The communards had not freed themselves of the reactionary concept of "marriage" with its implication of insolubility. Just when they thought they had settled the issue with their new resolutions, the following happened, according to the diary:

"Vladimir no longer loves Katja. He cannot explain it himself. When he married her, he loved her, but now nothing is left but a feeling of friendship, and to continue living as man and wife, without love, is difficult and unnecessary." The result was divorce, but the communards were very upset about it, and particularly the girls expressed themselves violently: "Vladimir is a pig. He should have thought things over before getting married. A fellow can't simply marry and then after a while run away. That is just like petit-bourgeois romanticism: when I want to I love, and when I no longer want to, I stop. Today it is; I can't live without you, let's get married, and after a while: I no longer love you, let's just be friends."

How insignificant had the influence of Soviet marriage legislation been on the structure of the communards! They considered petit-bourgeois what the petit-bourgeois himself dreaded so much: the dissolution of a marriage relationship.

The boys showed more understanding. They said, "There is

no doubt that Vladimir loved Katja, and it is not his fault that feeling has ceased to exist." There was a long debate in a full meeting of the commune. Some said, "Vladimir is right to want a divorce, he cannot be blamed. After all, no resolution of the commune can force him to love." But the majority condemned him, saying that he had entered the marriage frivolously and had shown himself unworthy of a Komsomolets and communard. In the course of time, 5 out of the 11 communards got married. The living conditions remained unchanged, boys and girls having separate bedrooms. From a standpoint of sex-hygiene, this is an impossible situation.

The communard Tanja wrote to her husband: "All I want is a bit of simple, personal happiness. I long for a quiet corner where we could be together undisturbed, so that we would not have to hide from the others, so that our relationship could be freer and more joyful. Why cannot the commune see that that is a simple human necessity?" Tanja had a healthy revolutionary structure.

We can see now what made the commune fail. The communards understood Tanja well; they all suffered under the living conditions and the ideological confusion, but they were unable to change them. The subject disappeared from deliberations and the diary and continued subterraneously. Of course, the problem of the sexual relationships in the commune would not have been solved if the housing problem had been solved. Solving this problem only means creating one important *external* prerequisite. The main difficulties were structural and ideological. The communards did not realize that one should not enter into a permanent relationship unless one has convinced oneself that each is suited to the other, sexually and otherwise; that, in order to find out, a couple first has to live together for some time without any obligation; that mutual adaptation often takes considerable time; that they have to be able to separate if they find that they are not suited sexually; that one cannot demand love; that sexual happiness either comes by itself or is absent. All this, these young men and women would undoubtedly have found out for

themselves, had not the conventional concept of marriage and **the reactionary equation** of procreation and sexuality been second nature with them. They had not been born with these concepts, but nothing had been done to eradicate them from social ideology.

### 3. INDISPENSABLE STRUCTURAL PREREQUISITES

Summarizing the foregoing observations, we may say the following:

1. Around 1900, the family situation was relatively simple. People lived in the shells of their families. There was no collective with demands which conflicted with the family situation as well as with the familial human structure. Nor was there any conflict between the family and the social order of the patriarchal authoritarian state. The suppressed sexuality found an outlet in hysteria, character rigidity and peculiarities, prostitution, perversions, suicide, authoritarian torturing of children and in war fanaticism.

Around 1930, the situation was considerably more complicated. The family disintegrated in the conflict between collectivistic production and the destruction of the economic basis of the family. The institution of the family came to be maintained much less by factors of economy, but all the more by factors of human structure. It could not live and it could not die. People felt unable to live any longer in the family, but neither did they feel able to live *without* it. They could not live with one partner forever, nor could they live alone. In brief, there was in the conservative countries no form of living which could take over and gratify the human needs which were freeing themselves from the family ties.

2. In the S.U., this new form was created. It was the *new family form of people not related by blood, in the collective*. It excludes the old form of marriage. The next question is what form the sexual relationships should take in such a community. This we cannot and should not try to predetermine. All we can do is to follow closely the sexual revolution and to support that trend in it which is not in conflict with the economic or social

forms of a free society. Generally, this means *absolute and concrete affirmation of sexual happiness*. This is possible neither in compulsive monogamy nor in accidental loveless and unsatisfactory relationships ("promiscuity"). The Soviet collective excludes as norms ascetism as well as compulsive lifelong monogamy. The sexual relationships enter a phase of entirely different conditions. The collective makes the human relationships of the individual so many-sided that a safeguard against a change of partners and the development of relationships with a third person is out of the question. Only if one has completely understood the painfulness and the seriousness of the idea that the beloved partner embraces somebody else, only if one has experienced it, actively and passively, can one understand the fact that this problem is not a mechanistic, economic problem but a structural problem. In a collective, with the same number of men and women, there are greater possibilities for a change of partners.

Not to try to understand and master this painful process of the birth of a new sexual order would be a dangerous omission. It has to be understood and mastered not in a moralistic, but in a life-affirmative way. Soviet youth had paid dearly for its lesson; they should not have suffered in vain.

Human structure must be adapted to collective living. This adaptation, no doubt, will require a decrease in jealousy and the fear of losing a partner. In general, people are incapable of sexual independence; they are bound to their partners by loveless, sticky ties and therefore incapable of separating from them; they are afraid that in case of losing a partner they might not find another. This fear is always based on infantile attachments to mother, father or older siblings. If the family were replaced by the collective, the formation of such pathological attachments would not occur. This would eliminate the core of the existing sexual helplessness, and thus enormously increase the possibility of finding suitable partners. It would, if not eliminate, at least greatly diminish the problem of jealousy. The ability to change permanent relationships without undue harm and suffering is one of the cardinal problems.

The alteration of people's structure should make them capable of experiencing simultaneously tender and sensual genital love, capable of experiencing sexuality fully from childhood on, that is, capable of *orgastic potency*. The prevention of sexual disturbances, of neurotic, unsatisfactory polygamy, of sticky neurotic sexual transference, of unconscious sexuality, etc., will require gigantic efforts. It is not a matter of telling people how they should live; it is a matter of bringing them up in such a manner that they will be able to regulate their sexual life themselves, without socially dangerous complications. This presupposes, in the first place, *the uninhibited, socially underwritten development of natural genitality*. Only then will the ability to be frank with one's sexual partner develop, and the ability to tolerate emotions of jealousy without proceeding to brutal actions. The conflicts of sexual life cannot be effaced from the earth, but their solution can, and should be, facilitated.

A consistent social prevention of the neuroses would see to it that people would not neurotically complicate their unavoidable everyday conflicts. If the masses of people had a natural sexual self-confidence, moral hypocrisy would become a social crime. The idea of collective living has nothing to do with the idea of a paradise. Struggle and pain and sexual pleasure are part of life. The essential point is that people should be capable of consciously experiencing pleasure and pain and capable of rationally mastering it. Such people would be incapable of serfdom. *Only genitally healthy people are capable of voluntary work and non-authoritarian self-determination of their lives*. Unless this has become clear, the task of altering people's structure will fail; more than that, it will not even be understood. The non-adaptation of human sexual structure to collective living will lead to objectively reactionary results. Every attempt to bring about this adaptation by moral, authoritarian demands must inevitably fail. One cannot *demand* "voluntary" sexual discipline. It is either there or it is not. All one can do is to aid people in the full development of their natural capacities.



## CHAPTER XIII

### SOME PROBLEMS OF INFANTILE SEXUALITY

The Russian kindergartens which I visited in 1929 had an excellent collective organization. A kindergarten of 30 children had 6 teachers who spent 5 hours with the children and 1 hour preparing for the work. The head of the school and the house-keeper were factory workers; the teachers had a secretary. About 15 of the children were factory workers' children, the others children of students. The board consisted of the head, one teacher, two parent representatives, a representative of the district and a physician. The children were brought up without religion; work went on on holidays. The choice of teaching subjects was striking; there were such subjects as, "What is the significance of the forest for people," or "for their health?" The children did much work with wood.

With regard to *sexuality*, things were less satisfactory. The teachers complained about the nervousness of the children. Many children showed sleeping ceremonials as protection against masturbation. Often, children who masturbated were taken away by the parents. A teacher remarked, "*Even* children of physicians masturbate." Here is a little observation: Talking with the head teacher, I looked out of the window and watched the children playing in the garden. A little boy was taking out his penis and a little girl was watching it. This happened at the very moment when the head teacher was assuring me that in *her* kindergarten "such things" as infantile masturbation and infantile sexuality did not occur.

## 1. THE CREATION OF A COLLECTIVE STRUCTURE

The history of the formation of ideologies shows that every social system, consciously or unconsciously, makes use of the influencing of children in order to anchor itself in the human structure. If we follow this anchoring process of the social order from matriarchal to patriarchal society, we find that the *sexual education* of the child is the core of this influencing process. In matriarchal society, based on the social order of primitive communism, the children enjoy complete sexual freedom. To the same extent to which patriarchy develops, economically and socially, we also find the development of an ascetic ideology as applied to the children. This change is in the service of creating structures with an *authoritarian* attitude instead of the previous non-authoritarian structure. In matriarchy, there is a *collective* sexuality of the children, corresponding to collective living in general; that is, the child is not forced into any preconceived forms of sexual life by any fixed norms. The free sexuality of the child provides a firm structural foundation for its *voluntary* adaptation to the collective and for voluntary work discipline.

With the development of the patriarchal family, the sexual suppression of the child developed to an increasing extent. Sexual playing with playmates came to be forbidden, masturbation to be punished. Roheim's report on the Pitchentara children shows clearly in what tragic manner the whole character of the child changes once its natural sexuality is suppressed. It becomes shy, apprehensive, afraid of authority and develops unnatural sexual impulses, such as sadistic tendencies. The free, unafraid behavior is replaced by obedience and dependence. The fighting down of the sexual impulses requires much energy, attention and "self-control." To the extent to which the vegetative energies of the child can no longer flow toward the outer world and into instinctual gratification, it loses its motor strength, its motility, its courage and its sense of reality. It becomes "inhibited." In the center of this inhibition is always the inhibition of motor activity, of running, jumping, romping, in brief, of muscular activity. One

can easily observe in all patriarchal circles how children, at the age of about 4, 5 or 6, become rigid, quiet, cold and begin to armor themselves against the outer world. In this process they lose their natural charm and often become awkward, unintelligent and "difficult to manage"; this in turn provokes an accentuation of the patriarchal methods of upbringing. This is also the structural basis of religious tendencies, the infantile attachment to the parents and the dependence on them. What the child has lost in natural motility it now begins to replace by imaginary ideals. It becomes introvert and neurotic, a "dreamer." The weaker it becomes in its reality functions, in actual feeling and achievement, the more rigid become the ideal demands which it makes on itself in order still to achieve something. We must make a strict distinction between *two forms of ideals*: those originating from the natural vegetative motility of the child, and those originating secondarily from the necessity for self-control and instinctual suppression. The first are the basis of voluntary, free-flowing productive work, the latter the basis of work as duty. Thus, in patriarchal society the principle of self-regulation in social adaptation and of joyful work is replaced structurally by the principle of authoritarian obedience and work as duty, together with rebellion against it. This sketch must suffice here. In reality, these things are very complicated and can be adequately presented only in the framework of special character-analytic studies.

What interests us here primarily is the question how a self-governing society reproduces itself in the children. Are there specific differences between the educational reproduction of the patriarchal and the self-governing, non-patriarchal system? There are two possibilities:

1. That of indoctrinating the child with revolutionary instead of patriarchal ideals;

2. That of altogether relinquishing ideological indoctrination and of forming, instead, the structure of the child in such a manner that it reacts of itself collectively and accepts the general revolutionary atmosphere *without rebellion*.

The second method is in keeping with the principle of the desired self-regulation; the first is not.

If in all periods of history the structure of children has been molded by way of their sexual education, the revolutionary structure can be no exception. There were, in the S.U., many attempts in this direction. Many teachers, especially those with a psychoanalytic orientation, such as Vera Schmidt, Spielrein and others, attempted to institute a positive sexual education. Yet, these were only isolated instances, and, taken all in all, *the sexual education of children in the S.U. remained sex-negative*. This fact is of extreme importance. Naturally, the structure of the child would have to be in harmony with the desired collective living. This was impossible without the affirmation of infantile sexuality, for one cannot bring up children in a collective and at the same time suppress the most lively of their impulses, the sexual one. If one does suppress it, the child, though it lives *outwardly* in the collective, has to spend even more of its *inner* energies to suppress its sexuality than it would in the family and will develop more serious conflicts and will get even lonelier. In this situation, the educator has only one possibility, that of strict discipline, of an "order" enforced from the outside, of anti-sexual restrictions and ideals. This becomes all the more difficult in that in the collective, sexuality receives more stimulation than in the family. This is why the objections against collective education are usually motivated by the fear that the children will go "bad," i.e., will show sexual impulses.

The impressions made by the kindergartens were quite contradictory. There were old patriarchal forms alongside new, unusual and promising ones. The children, guided by a teacher, had to decide things for themselves ("self-government"). An innovation which is undoubtedly important for the alteration of structure is the combination of manual work with intellectual learning. The so-called work schools, where besides the usual school subjects the children also learn a trade, are undoubtedly the prototype of educational institutions which will produce collective structures. Until only a few years ago, there was a truly companionate rela-

tionship between students and teachers. A particularly impressive example of revolutionary structure formation were the so-called "flying kindergartens" in the cultural park in Moscow. The visitors to the park could leave their children in a kindergarten where teachers played with them. This did away with the depressing sight of the child who, bored and unwilling, walks along the park with its parents or governess. Thus, children got to know each other and had a chance to play together. Children from 2 to 10 came together in a large room and received some primitive instrument such as a key, spoon or plate. A music teacher would sit at a piano and play something. Without any direction or prodding, the children would begin to catch the rhythm and participate with their "instruments." Not the existence of a cultural park is specifically revolutionary; they exist in the most reactionary countries. But that the children were brought together and entertained in this fashion was revolutionary. In this way, the motor and rhythmic needs of the children were taken into account. Children who experience the joy of such seemingly unorganized play will develop a revolutionary ideology themselves instead of having to be indoctrinated with it.

The question of managing *infantile motor activity* leads us to the center of the problem of education. The task of a revolutionary movement, quite generally, is that of liberating and gratifying the previously suppressed vegetative impulses. This is the real meaning of a free economy. Sufficient and ever increasing possibilities of the gratification of their needs should enable people to develop their natural abilities and needs. A child which is uninhibited and free in its motility is not likely to be receptive toward reactionary ideologies and mores. On the other hand, a child which is inhibited in its motility is prone to accept any kind of ideology. Here we should mention the attempts of the Soviet government in the first years after the revolution to give the children full freedom to criticize their parents. This was a measure which at first was not at all understood in Western European countries. Many children called their parents by their first names. That is, school as well as parental home began to change their

attitude in the sense of producing a revolutionary structure in the children. This tendency, which might be illustrated by many more examples, was opposed by another one which began more and more to gain the upper hand. Recently, the latter triumphed in that the parents again were given the responsibility for education. This meant another regression to patriarchal forms of upbringing. The work on the complicated problems of collective upbringing seemed to cease. Family upbringing became again the rule. There was a corresponding change in the type of political education in the schools. For example, one reads in pedagogical magazines that the children engage in political contests. Questions like, "What was the thesis at the Sixth World Congress?" show that the compulsive indoctrination with Communist ideology has become the method of choice. A child, of course, is unable to grasp or judge any theses of a World Congress. No matter how good it is at such contests, no matter how well it recites the theses: that does not protect it in the least against fascist influences. It will be just as easily indoctrinated with fascist ideologies. In contrast, a child with a completely free motility and natural sexuality will spontaneously resist the influence of ascetic and authoritarian ideologies. In the authoritarian, superficial and external influencing of the children, the political reaction can more than compete with the revolutionary education. Not so in the field of sexual education. No reactionary or political ideology can offer to the children what the social revolution can offer them with regard to their sexuality.

It is clear, then, that in order to produce a non-authoritarian structure in the child, its vegetative, sexual motility must be safeguarded.

## 2. THE CREATION OF A NON-AUTHORITARIAN STRUCTURE IN THE CHILD

The central task in bringing about a non-authoritarian structure in people is the sex-affirmative education of the child.

In August, 1921, the Moscow psychoanalyst Vera Schmidt founded a children's home in which she undertook the experiment of a correct upbringing of small children. Her experiences,

published in 1924 in a pamphlet, *PSYCHOANALYTIC EDUCATION IN SOVIET RUSSIA*, show that what sex-economy teaches today with regard to early upbringing, developed there spontaneously out of a realistic attitude of affirming pleasure. Her work was entirely in the direction of affirming infantile sexuality.

The main principles of the home were the following: The teachers were told that there was to be no punishment, that they should not even speak sharply to the children. Praise and blame were considered as judgments which were incomprehensible to the child and served only the purpose of the adult. Thus the authoritarian moralistic principle was eliminated. What took its place?

What was judged was the objective result of the child's action and not the child itself. In other words, one would call a house drawn or built by the child beautiful or ugly, *without* either praising or reprimanding the child for it. If there was a fight, the child was not reprimanded but shown what it had done to the other child.

The teachers had to guard against passing any judgment on the behavior or peculiarities of the children. Violent demonstrations of affection on the part of the teachers, like kisses and embraces, were not allowed. As Vera Schmidt correctly points out, such demonstrations always serve the gratification of the adult rather than of the child.

This did away with another harmful principle of moralistic authoritarian upbringing: those who feel justified in beating children also feel justified in using them for living out their unsatisfied sexuality; this is seen particularly clearly in the rabid advocates of family upbringing. Once one relinquishes disciplinary measures and moralistic judgment, there is no longer any need for patching up with kisses the harm one has done with beatings.

The whole environment of the child was adapted to its age and special needs. Toys and materials were chosen according to the child's urge for activity and so that they would stimulate its creative abilities; if the children's needs changed, the toys and

materials were changed correspondingly. This principle of *adapting the material to the need* instead of adapting the need to the material is in full harmony with the basic concepts of sex-economy; it applies to the totality of social existence. *Economic institutions should be adapted to the needs*, instead of the needs being adapted to the existing economy. This sex-economic principle, as demonstrated in Vera Schmidt's kindergarten, is the opposite of the moralistic authoritarian principle employed in the Montessori schools where the children have to serve their materials, as it were.

Vera Schmidt said: "If the child is to adjust itself to external reality without the greatest difficulties, the outer world should not appear to the child as an inimical something. We try, therefore, to make reality as pleasurable as possible for the child and to replace every primitive pleasure which it is supposed to learn to renounce, with other, rational pleasures."

That means, if the child is to adjust itself voluntarily to reality, it must first learn to love this reality. It must be able to identify itself joyfully with the environment: this is the sex-economic principle. In contrast, the moralistic authoritarian principle tries to adjust the child to an inimical environment by means of a sense of duty and with the aid of moral pressure. If a mother or teacher behaves in such a way that the child loves her spontaneously, that is sex-economic. A social or religious demand, "You must love your mother," whether she is lovable or not, is moralistic, authoritarian.

The necessity of adjusting themselves to social living was made easier for the children in many ways. The demands for social living came from daily living and the children's community itself, not from the whims of neurotic, ambitious and love-starved adults. The children were told simply why certain things were asked of them; they were not given orders. Self-confidence and a feeling of independence on the part of the children were developed and supported, because those children will most easily adjust to the necessities of life who are not being led but are self-confident and independent. Such facts are completely in-



comprehensible to the top-sergeant type of educator, and yet, they are a matter of course. The sex-economic principle of voluntary renunciation of a type of gratification no longer possible socially was also used in the training for cleanliness. Prohibitions of any kind on the part of the teachers were out of the question. The children did not know that their sexual impulses could be judged any differently from their other natural bodily needs. Thus they satisfied them without embarrassment in the presence of the teachers, as naturally as hunger or thirst. This made any secrecy unnecessary, increased the children's confidence in the teachers, furthered their adjustment to reality and thus laid a sound basis for the total development. Under these conditions, the teachers had the possibility of watching the sexual development of the children step by step, and of furthering the sublimation of this or that impulse.

Vera Schmidt points out that the educator must constantly work on himself. It was shown in the kindergarten that restlessness or disorder among the children was regularly the result of unconscious neurotic attitudes on the part of the teachers. A sex-economic upbringing of the small child is absolutely impossible as long as the educators are not free from irrational tendencies or have not, at least, learned to recognize and control them. This becomes immediately evident if one looks at the concrete aspects of this type of education.

In so-called Western culture, mothers and nurses cannot tolerate it if the child is *not* trained to the potty within the first year of life. In Vera Schmidt's kindergarten, no attempt was made to put the children on the pot "at regular intervals" until about the end of the second year of life. Even then, they were never in any way forced. Nor were they reprimanded if they wet themselves. It was passed over as a natural happening.

This central fact of infantile training to cleanliness shows the prerequisites which have to be fulfilled before one can even think of a sex-economic upbringing of the child. In the family it is impossible; it is possible only in the collective. While ignorant physicians and educators believe that bedwetting calls for drastic

punitive measures (which only create a fixation of the disturbance) Vera Schmidt reports the following: A girl of about 3 suffered a relapse into bedwetting. No attention was paid to it, and 3 months later the girl became clean again by herself. This is another fact which will remain inconceivable to the authoritarian educator. Nevertheless, it is a matter of course.

"The attitude of the children toward the question of cleanliness," writes Vera Schmidt, "is conscious and matter-of-course. There is no feeling of 'shame' connected with these processes. Our method seems liable to save the children from the severe traumatic experiences usually connected with the training for sphincter control." She is undoubtedly correct in this. Clinical experience shows that the most frequent cause of severe disturbance of orgasmic potency in the adult is the strict training to excremental cleanliness. It creates an association of shame with the genital function. In this way, the capacity for regulating the vegetative energy household becomes disturbed. Vera Schmidt's procedure was entirely correct: children who do not associate shame with the excretory functions do not develop corresponding genital disturbances later on.

The children in the home were not in any way hindered in satisfying their desire for motor activity; they were allowed to run, to jump, to romp, etc. Thus they were able not only to live out these natural impulses but also to put them to use. This is completely in accord with the sex-economic concept that the freedom of the infantile impulses is *the* prerequisite for their social and cultural utilization, while their inhibition makes their sublimation impossible because they become repressed.

In our kindergartens, on the other hand, where children are being made "capable of culture" and "adjusted to reality" by inhibiting their motor activity, children of the ages of 4, 5, or 6 show an alarming change in their whole behavior: it changes from being natural, lively and active to being quiet and "well-behaved"; the children grow cold. Anna Freud, in her book, *PSYCHOANALYSIS FOR TEACHERS*, confirms this finding, without, however, criticizing it; more than that, she considers it a necessity, because her

conscious goal is that of bringing up the child to become a *conservative* citizen. This is based on the erroneous assumption, from which all conservative education suffers, that the natural motility of the child is at variance with its capability for culture. The exact opposite is true.

A very important part of Vera Schmidt's report is that dealing with *masturbation*. She found that the children masturbated "relatively little." Quite correctly she distinguished two forms of masturbation: One caused by the physical stimuli arising from the genitals and serving only the satisfaction of the urge for genital pleasure, and that other form of masturbation which occurs as "a reaction to an insult, a disparagement or a limitation of freedom." The first form presents no difficulties. The second form results from an increased vegetative excitability as a result of fear or stubbornness which the child tries to discharge by means of genital stimulation. Vera Schmidt grasped this fact correctly, while Anna Freud erroneously considers the so-called excessive masturbation in children an "instinctual living out." It is to be noted that under the conditions of a sex-affirmative education masturbation occurred "without any secrecy, under the eyes of the teachers." If one knows the tremendous masturbation anxiety of the average educator, one understands that first of all "the educator has to be educated" before he is able calmly to watch the natural sexual expressions in the child.

In the same way, the children were absolutely free to satisfy their *sexual curiosity* among themselves. There was no objection to their mutually inspecting each other; correspondingly, their utterances concerning the naked body were "entirely calm and objective." "We noticed that the children did not demonstrate interest in the sexual organs when they were naked but only when they were dressed." When the children asked sexual questions, these were answered clearly and truthfully. They knew, says Vera Schmidt, no parental authority and force. To them, father and mother were ideal beings whom they loved. "It is quite possible," writes Vera Schmidt, "that such good relation-

ships with the parents can develop only when education takes place outside of the parental home."

While the practice of this kindergarten was entirely in accord with the sex-economic affirmation of sexuality and of life in general, the theoretical concepts diverged. In explaining the principles of the home, Vera Schmidt speaks of the "overcoming of the pleasure principle" and the necessity of replacing it by the "reality principle." She had not freed herself from the erroneous psychoanalytic concept of the mechanistic antithesis between pleasure and achievement; she had not recognized that the realization of the pleasure principle at any given stage is the best prerequisite for sublimation and social achievement. Her practical work, in fact, contradicted her theoretical concepts.

An important factor for the evaluation of such collectivistic attempts to change the structure of the coming generation is the fate suffered by this children's home. Very soon after its founding, all kinds of rumors began to spread in the city. It was said that the most horrible things were going on there, that, for example, the teachers, for the purpose of experiment, indulged in premature sexual stimulation of the children, etc. The authorities who had agreed to the founding of the home instituted an investigation. Some educators and pediatricians spoke in its favor, the psychologists, of course, against it. The commissariat for education declared that the home could not continue to function but gave as the reason the high cost of its maintenance. The real reason was a different one. The directorship of the Psychoneurological Institute, with which the home was affiliated, had just changed hands. The new director, who was also a member of the investigating committee, gave a negative report; more than that, he insulted the workers and the children at the home. Thereupon the Psychoneurological Institute not only withdrew its economic but also its ideological support.

Just as the home was about to close, a representative of the German miners' union, "Union," appeared and offered, in the name of the German and Russian miners' unions, to support the home financially and ideologically. From April, 1922, on, the home

was supplied by the German union with food and by the Russian union with coal. But the home could not continue for long. Commissions, investigations and the withdrawal of support forced it to close. It is significant that this happened at about the same time that the general inhibition of the Russian sexual revolution began to assert itself.

The fact should not go unmentioned that the International Psychoanalytic Association also had a partly skeptical, partly negative attitude toward Vera Schmidt's experiment. This negative attitude was an expression of the later development of psychoanalysis into an *antisexual* theory. Nevertheless, the work of Vera Schmidt was the *first attempt in the history of education to give the theory of infantile sexuality a practical content*. As such, it is of historical importance. Undoubtedly, Vera Schmidt was the first educator who, purely intuitively, grasped the necessity as well as the nature of the alteration of human structure in a practical manner. And, as always in the course of the sexual revolution, authorities, "scientists," psychologists and established educators paved the way for regression and defeat, while trade unionists, without any theoretical knowledge, showed in a practical way that they had grasped the full importance of the problem.

We shall now compare this correct attempt with the simultaneous activities of an allegedly revolutionary educator. This comparison will show that if there should ever be a new attempt, one will have to rely on simple people with a natural feeling for life and not on the reactionary professionals in the field of education and psychology.

### 3. SHAM-REVOLUTIONARY, PASTORAL EDUCATION

In no other field does the revolutionary educator meet as difficult problems as in that of sexual education. True, it cannot be separated from education as a whole, but it presents difficulties all of its own. The educator himself, even though he may come from a revolutionary home, has gone through a thorough conservative sexual education. Parental home, school, church

and the whole conservative environment have permeated him with sex-negating attitudes; these come in conflict with his own revolutionary attitudes. Nevertheless, if he wants to educate children in a revolutionary instead of in a reactionary sense, he must rid himself of his reactionary views, develop a point of view of his own in keeping with his class and must put it into practice. He will take over essential parts of conservative pedagogy, will throw out many parts of it as antisexual, and will adapt other parts. This is a big and difficult task which has hardly begun to be tackled. The greatest difficulty is that presented by the clerics in the revolutionary camp. They are reactionary, sexually warped intellectuals, revolutionaries due to neurotic motives who, instead of contributing positive knowledge, only cause confusion. One of these is Salkind, a member of the Communist Academy *and* of the International Psychoanalytic Association. His views were fought bitterly by the revolutionary youth in the S.U. but these views governed official ideology, in Russia and also in Germany. His article, "Einige Fragen der sexuellen Erziehung der Jungpioniere" (*Das proletarische Kind*, 12 Nr. 1/2, 1932) created much confusion, as the German Sexpol discovered again and again. We shall use this article to show how hopeless is a mingling of revolutionary form and sex-inimical content.

Salkind starts out with the correct statement that the pioneer movement exerts influence on the children in their "most important phase of development," that it has means at its disposal which the family and the school lack. But he has a concept of infantile sexuality which is no better than the church concept. All other mistakes of Salkind and his like derive from this concept. He writes:

For this reason [because the pioneer movement has better means at its disposal than the family] it must become the main force in the fight against the parasitic sexual channeling of the growing children's energy.

According to Salkind, infantile sexuality is "parasitic." How does he arrive at this evaluation? What does he mean by it? What

conclusions for education does he draw from it? "Parasitic" means something which is foreign to the organism. This sexual philosopher, whom the S.U. tolerates, holds seriously that the "channeling" of energy into the "parasitic," the sexual, should be *prevented*.

If the pioneer leaders know how to present to the children the material of pioneer work in a form corresponding to their age, no energy will be left over for parasitic dominants.

That is, Salkind believes that the sexual interests of the children can be eliminated. He does not ask himself how the collective interests could be brought into harmony with the sexual interests, or where they conflict with each other and where not.

One might ask what is the difference here between Salkind and any priest or reactionary pedagogue; they, too, are convinced of the possibility of completely diverting the sexual energy. Today it is no longer possible to deny the existence of infantile and adolescent sexuality. Today, the slogan is that of complete diversion of the sexual energies, which is only the old thing in a new form. It never even occurred to Salkind to ask why it is that church and reactionary society do not permit an infantile sex life. He did not realize that, if he wants to set up rules for revolutionary education, he should first give his reason why, nevertheless, he takes the same point of view as the reactionary educator. He vaguely seems to arrive at such a reason in his assumption that sexual life and collectivism are antithetical; he wishes to eliminate sexuality in the interest of collectivism.

It is mainly neglected, lonely children who become victims of premature strivings, children who lack in active companionship with children of their own age . . . The more they are isolated from the collective and indulge in loneliness, the closer they come to a precocious sexual parasitism.

These are ignorant, empty phrases. For what is "premature"? Is it premature when a child of four masturbates? Is it premature

when an adolescent of 13 or 15, who is sexually mature, satisfies himself? Is it premature if he wants sexual intercourse? Salkind and his ideological companions prove, with their abstract, slogan-like argumentation, that they failed to come down from the regions of abstract ethics to the realities of infantile and adolescent life. Contrary to Salkind's statement, those pioneer leaders were completely right who proceeded to give sexual enlightenment as soon as they noticed unhealthy sexual manifestations in their groups. Every sensible youth leader knows that it is not the lack of "collectivism" which causes the so-called "sexual conditions" but that the reverse is true: the disruption of infantile sex life—caused and maintained, among other things, by such views as Salkind's—is the most important cause of disturbed collective living. It will never be possible to build up collectivism on the basis of sexual suppression—except in an authoritarian manner. According to Salkind, "incessant collective control of the children's sexual and other behavior should be the basis for a healthy sexual development." "Healthy" in this case means, of course, "asexual." These "pioneer ethics" Salkind proposes to achieve by "appropriate organization of work."

But now let us get out of the realm of empty words and try to imagine in concrete terms what these proposals mean. How long are the adolescents supposed to work? Uninterruptedly? At night too, in bed, so that they will not touch their genitals? And when the children and adolescents are at play, should we exercise "incessant collective control" to prevent their falling in love and having "romances"? Salkind explicitly speaks of "children" when referring to adolescents of 13 to 16 years of age, that is, adolescents of sexual maturity! Why should they *not* fall in love and have "romances"? Because it disturbs collectivism? Or because people with Salkind's mentality cannot stand it? In public discussions of youth organizations in Berlin the fact was ascertained beyond any doubt that the groups were likely to disintegrate precisely when there were too few girls, and that they held together when there was an approximately equal number of boys and girls. This certainly was not so because they "exercised



incessant collective control" in order not to let any "unnecessary thoughts of love" come up. No, it was because they found partners, and the sexual life ceased to be something which interfered with the collective. The Salkinds arrive at their absurd statements because they fail to distinguish *healthy* from *disturbed* sex life; because they fail to examine the causes of a "loose" sex life; because they fail to see that it is precisely the inhibition of healthy sexuality which creates a disturbed sexuality which then makes a collective working together impossible. How wooden, bureaucratic and life-inimical is the following thesis:

An active collectivism is the best means for developing a feeling of sexual equality. A co-worker does not stimulate any useless thoughts of love. For that there is neither energy nor time left.

What does "sexual equality" mean here? We are for sexual equality; we fight the political reaction with the ideology of healthy sexuality. The Salkinds, on the other hand, propagate "sexual equality" *in the prohibition of a sex life*. Precisely like the leaders of a Catholic youth organization, with the one difference that they do not deny coeducation; *not yet*.<sup>1</sup> But this is just the way in which they arrive at absurdities. Concretely: what are we to do according to Salkind's ideology when a boy and a girl work together on an important project and—Salkind's Ten Commandments notwithstanding—fall in love with each other? What is to be done then? Exercise collective control? "Smothering" the love in still more work? Or enforce sexual equality in abstinence? This at an age which Salkind himself terms "the most decisive stage of development" and the "stage of growing sexual demands." What dishonesty and hypocrisy are contained in the following:

Complete mutual trust and mutual respect, complete mutual honesty—this is the prime prerequisite without which a healthy system of education is impossible in the pioneer groups.

<sup>1</sup> *Translator's note:* The "not yet" is italicized in the original which was written in 1935; 8 years later, in 1943, the report came from the S.U. that co-education had been abolished. (Cf. comment in the *International Journal of Sex-Economy and Orgone-Research* 2, 1943, 193f.)—T.P.W.

How can there be mutual trust and mutual respect between children and educators if youth is not understood in one of their most burning problems?

The child at pioneer age knows a good deal about sexual questions. Only too much! But it does not know this fact and does not know that which it should know. And the leader cannot simply pass over this aberration; he will have to talk. But how should he talk?

Yes, how should the pioneer leader talk? Here is Salkind's answer:

Certainly he should not give the children lectures about the sexual question. More than that: he should not talk with the children about specific sexual subjects at all.

Does that mean that sexuality should be discussed only in connection with social and political questions, which would be correct? No. Here is Salkind's view of infantile and adolescent sexuality:

In individual children, careful observation discloses the presence of masturbation.

Great caution is needed on the part of the leader, because the children are particularly sensitive [and rightly so, W.R.] if one tries to fight these *harmful habits* of theirs . . .

This is precisely the way our German Father Hypocrite used to talk! And further:

In any case, the teacher is allowed to exert an influence on the immediate sexual sphere of the child only if he has had previous pedagogic training. [One might ask, training by whom? And to what effect? To the effect that masturbation is a harmful habit?] A public discussion of such controversial subjects with the leader of the group as chairman is absolutely inadmissible. The thing must be nipped in the bud in a personal interview. [What thing? The scandal that children and adolescents masturbate?] In doing so, one has to use people of whose *sexual blamelessness* one has convinced oneself.

This is what is supposed to be "complete mutual honesty." No wonder that the pioneer groups showed "sexual delinquency," that is, a disturbed sex life full of contradictions.

The Salkinds have never comprehended what every youngster, though he may not be "sexually blameless," knows spontaneously from his own life: that it is never the sexual activity as such, but the inhibitions and educational methods as advocated by Salkind which create sexual delinquency. Yet, Salkind states:

Not . . . without urgent necessity, not without previous alarm signals should the leader, among other questions, touch upon the sexual question.

With such utter confusion in the leading circles, how could any youth leader know his way?

Such pedagogues as Salkind evade the enormous difficulties which present themselves when one approaches the question of infantile and adolescent sex life logically and consistently. One cannot enlighten youngsters sexually and at the same time prohibit sexual playing and masturbation. One cannot keep from them the truth about the function of sexual gratification. All one can do is to state the truth and to let life finally take its free course. Sexual potency, physical vigor and beauty must become enduring ideals in the fight for social progress. The revolution cannot take as its ideal the beast of burden instead of the bull, the capon instead of the cock. People have been beasts of burden long enough. Castrates are no fighters for freedom.

#### 4. AGAIN THE PROBLEM OF DELINQUENCY

The Russian revolution did not have at its disposal the necessary number of educators, especially not of sexologically correctly trained educators to manage the gigantic problem of juvenile delinquency. The final result of not understanding the sexual revolt of youth was an accentuation of the delinquency problem around 1935. It cannot be said that this new wave of delinquency was a result of conditions of the civil war, for the

delinquents of 1935 were already children of the new social system. The S.U. had tried everything to solve the problem of delinquency. We must ask, then, why the solution of the problem failed after all. That it failed, is shown by the following government resolutions:

The Council of the people's commissars of the USSR and the Central Committee of the Communist Party find that the presence of delinquent children in the cities and towns of the country—now, that the material and cultural situation of the workers is steadily improving and the State gives considerable financial support to institutions for children—is due mainly to the poor work done by the local Soviet authorities and the organizations (of the party, of unions, of Kom-somols) for the liquidation and prevention of juvenile delinquency, and by the lack of an organized participation of the general public in this problem.

a) Most children's homes have insufficient financial support and are educationally inadequate;

b) The organized fight against rowdyism among children and against criminal elements among children and adolescents is inadequate or lacking;

c) The necessary measures have not been taken to get children who have taken to the street (who have lost their parents or left them, or escaped from an institution) immediately to an institution or to return them to their parents;

d) No measures are being taken against parents or guardians who take an indifferent attitude and let their children engage in rowdyism, larceny, moral degeneration and vagrancy, and they are not being called to account.

So, the "poor work" of various organizations was blamed for the situation. One took recourse again to the parents' responsibility and to measures which were no longer in accord with the educational principles adopted by the revolution. Was it that these principles themselves had failed? No, they had only been incomplete, they had left out the central problem, and often enough consciously evaded it. This was the problem of the sex life of children. Collectivistic ideology and collective living of

the adults, *while at the same time the old sexual suppression of children, sexual hypocrisy and family education are maintained, must inevitably lead to juvenile delinquency.* In the presence of a general development toward freedom, the sexual demands of the children cannot be suppressed without harm to society and the child.

In 1935, the Soviet government made a tremendous effort to abolish delinquency. The commissariats for education were ordered to place the children in homes. The militia were authorized to fine parents up to 200 rubles for their children's rowdyism in the street. Parents and guardians were made financially responsible for any material damage caused by the children. If parents were "negligent in the supervision of their children's conduct" the children were to be taken away from them and placed in homes at their expense.

The Norwegian *Arbeiderbladet* of June 16, 1935, reported that the Soviet government had to take recourse to mass arrests of delinquent children. In addition to theft and looting, the paper mentioned the infestation of the children with venereal disease: "Like a pestilence, the children carried the infection from one place to another." True, the children had public baths, children's homes and hospitals at their disposal, but they refused to avail themselves of these institutions. Children escaped from homes in great numbers. The *Arbeiderbladet* reported that the *Istvestia* carried almost daily advertisements which tried to locate escaped children. "Until a short time ago, such advertisements hardly ever appeared in the Russian press; now they are quite common." The Soviet government tried the following measures: they provided qualified teachers, tools and machines, educational films and special textbooks. In addition, they tried to mobilize the whole population for help in the problem.

In my talks with the Soviet educators Vera Schmidt and Geshelina in 1929 I pointed out again and again that such measures were incomplete and hopeless in themselves. It was clear that the delinquency problem, though it developed out of the civil war conditions, was constantly being nourished by the

lack of clarity about sexual living. There was plenty of work in the S.U. Work therapy was highly developed. There was no more unemployment. The children's homes and the collectives were well organized. But *in spite* of all this, children kept running away, kept preferring the dangerous destructive life of the streets and its antisociality to a life in the children's homes. It is a gigantic problem which cannot be solved by education to work or explained away by the romantic tendencies of youth. In Germany, we had ample opportunity to study the true nature of juvenile delinquency. When my endeavors in the interest of the sexual health of youth became known, more and more escaped youngsters came to me and talked to me frankly and honestly—because I understood their main problem—about their misery and the true motives of their antisocial behavior. I can assure the reader that among them there were a great many splendid, highly intelligent and capable young people. Again and again I found how much more vital these so-called delinquents were than all the well-behaved hypocrites, just because they did rebel against a social order which denied them their most primitive natural right. There was little variation in their basic story. Again and again the same thing: they had been unable to master their sexual phantasies and excitations. Their parents had not understood them; neither had the teachers or authorities. They had been unable to talk with anybody about it. Thus they had become secretive, distrustful and malicious. They had to keep their troubles to themselves; only companions with a similar structure and similar difficulties understood them. Since they were not understood in school, they boycotted the school; since the parents did not understand them, they cursed their parents. Since, at the same time, they had a deep attachment to the parents and unconsciously still expected help and consolation from them, they developed severe guilt feelings and conflicts. This is what brought them to the street. There, they were not happy either, but at least they felt free. That is, until the police got hold of them and sent them to reform school, often enough only because they, being 15, 16 or 17 years old, had been caught

together with girls of their own age. In many of these youngsters I found that they had been psychically healthy, endowed with a sound judgment and rational rebellion, up to the moment where they fell into the clutches of the police and the welfare authorities. From that moment on, they became psychopaths and were socially ostracized. The crimes which society commits against these adolescents are immeasurable. It was possible—and this further confirmed the correctness of my views—to straighten out such “delinquents” if one showed them in a practical way that one really understood them.

Even in countries like Germany the adolescent problem was difficult and highly complicated. The conflict between the urgent demands of sexuality and their social denial was of necessity much more acute in a country like the S.U. where full freedom was proclaimed while sexual suppression continued to exist. General collective living together with continuance of familial education led inevitably to social explosions. The fact also has to be remembered that the mothers were more and more included in the process of production and public life and thus created a new conflict in their relationship with the children. Since the mothers were out at work and in public life, the children wanted to go out into life also. The path into a life of work was opened to them, but a great many were unwilling to take it if at the same time that of sexuality remained barred to them. This, and not the civil war—which in 1935 was already history—and not the Soviet system or any other factors, was the actual basis of delinquency. There is no doubt that juvenile delinquency is the visible manifestation of the subterranean sexual crisis of infantile and adolescent life. It is safe to predict that *no society will succeed in mastering the problem of delinquency and psychopathy in children and adolescents which does not muster the knowledge and the courage to regulate the sex life of children and adolescents in a sex-affirmative manner.*

It is impossible to predict what concrete individual measures will have to be taken; we can only point out general facts and necessities. The solution of the problem of delinquency, like that

of education in general, will depend on *whether it will be possible to eliminate from the process of structure formation the incestuous and guilt-laden hate fixation of the children to the parents and of the parents to the children*. This will not be possible unless the children enter collective education *before* they are in a position to form these destructive attachments to the parents, that is, before the fourth year of life. This does not mean destruction of the natural love relationships between parents and children, but only of the pathological, neurotic relationships. The solution of the problem will be impossible until the conflict between collective and family is solved on a broad social scale. Parents and children should be able to love and enjoy each other fully. But, as paradoxical as it may sound, just that presupposes doing away with the family and its education as they function today. The problem will remain unsolved until we eliminate the proscription of infantile sexuality and the resulting feeling of expulsion from society because of sexual desires and actions. It should be made impossible for reports like the following to appear:

"Garik, 6 years old: 'For goodness' sake, what's happened?' Something unheard of. 8-year-old Lubka, hardly has she learned to write, 'falls in love' and passes a slip of paper to the 8-year-old Pavlik: 'My sweet, my honey, my diamond . . .' 'To fall in love! What a petit-bourgeois thing to do! After all, the times of Tsar Nicholas are over!' The matter was hotly debated and, as a punishment, Lubka had to stay away from the playground for 3 days." Thus writes Fanina Halle, to prove the morality of the Soviet system, in her well-known book, *THE WOMAN IN SOVIET RUSSIA*, where she asks for the rehabilitation of communism in the judgment of the whole "moral" world.

Educators and sexologists who are unable to tolerate the sight of two children caressing each other, who cannot see the charm and the naturalness of infantile sexuality, are completely useless for a revolutionary education of the new generation, no matter how good their intentions may be. There is, in the infantile sexual impulse, in the infantile demonstration of sensual love, infinitely



more genuine morality, strength and will to life than in thousands of dry analyses and treatises. Here, in the aliveness of infantile nature lies the guarantee for a society of really free human beings, and only here.

That much is certain. But it would be dangerous to think that with the simple finding of this fact the problems are solved. On the contrary, we must realize that the alteration of human structure from the patriarchal and authoritarian life to a life in which people are free, capable of voluntary achievement and capable of natural enjoyment will present the most difficult tasks. The Marxist sentence that "the educator himself has to be educated" has become an empty phrase. It is time to give it a concrete and practical content: the educators of a new generation, parents, teachers, government leaders and economists, must first be sexually healthy themselves before they can even consent to a sex-economic upbringing of children and adolescents.

## CHAPTER XIV

### THE LESSONS OF THE SOVIET STRUGGLE FOR A "NEW LIFE"

All those who are confronted with these problems in their everyday work will ask for concrete directions. Understandable as this demand is, it cannot be fulfilled. One can only learn from the failures of revolutionary changes what caused these attempts to fail; one can only sketch the general outlines of the ways and means of a new development which will lead in the desired direction. We cannot foresee just what will be the concrete circumstances in this or that country in the case of new revolutionary changes. Whatever they may be, the same basic principles will apply. Under no circumstances should one develop any Utopian ideas; they would only block the way to the concrete realities at any given time.

One of the basic principles which derive from the examination of the inhibition of the sexual revolution is the *explicit guarantee of all the necessary prerequisites of sexual happiness*. As far as legislation is concerned, the Soviet sexual legislation of 1917 to 1921 was definitely in this direction; it would not require much change. But that would by no means be sufficient. What is needed are serious measures to see to it that these laws really have a practical effect, that is, that they finally become part of human structure. Apart from that, a series of measures was lacking which would have directed the spontaneous revolution in sexual life into orderly channels.

In order to safeguard revolutionary sexual legislation, the responsibility for the sexual health of the population has to be taken out of the hands of urologists, gynecologists and reactionary social hygienists. Every single worker, every woman, every

peasant and every adolescent must realize that in a reactionary society there are *no authorities* at all in this field; that those who consider themselves sexologists and social hygienists are permeated by ascetic attitudes and the concern for people's "morality." Everyone who has done extensive work with adolescents knows that any untrained but healthy worker's youth has a better feeling for and more correct judgment about questions of sex life than any of these so-called authorities. On the basis of this correct feeling and knowledge, the workers should be able to create organizations and appoint functionaries from their own midst who will deal with the problems of the sexual revolution.

The new regulation of sexual life must start with a different education of the child. It is indispensable, therefore, that the teachers be re-educated and that the people learn to use their correct instinct in these questions to criticize the educators who have an incorrect sexological training. It will be much easier to re-educate the teachers than it will be to convince the physicians and hygienists. There are steadily increasing indications that progressive educators in Western Europe and in America spontaneously look for new methods in the education of children and adolescents and often begin to develop sex-affirmative concepts.

The reorganization of sexual life will not succeed unless the political leaders of the workers' movements give the problem the attention that it deserves. Political leaders with an ascetic sexual ideology are a severe hindrance. Leaders who are untrained in this field and who are often themselves sexually unhealthy will have to realize that they themselves have to learn before they can lead in this field. Furthermore, they will have to learn that the spontaneous discussions about sexual problems cannot be brushed aside as a "diversion from the class struggle." On the contrary, these discussions will have to be made a part of the total effort for the construction of a free society. The workers should never again tolerate a situation in which ethical theorists, compulsion neurotics and frigid women have the organization of sexual life in their hands. One must realize that it is just the

latter people who, urged by unconscious motives, begin to enter the discussion just at a time when the situation calls for the greatest clarity. The untrained worker then is usually rendered silent out of respect for the intellectual and concedes—quite unjustifiably—that the latter knows better. Every mass organization will have to have sexologically well-trained functionaries who have no other job than that of observing the development of the organization with regard to sexuality, to learn from these observations and to tackle the difficulties in conjunction with a central sexological agency.

Beyond the positive sexual legislation and the measures for its safeguarding, there are a number of other measures which follow as a result of past experience.

For example, any kind of literature which creates sexual anxiety must be prohibited. This includes pornography and mystery stories as well as gruesome fairy tales for children. This literature will have to be replaced by one that, instead of horrors, describes and discusses the genuine feeling for the infinitely manifold sources of natural enjoyment in life.

Past experience shows unequivocally that any kind of hindrance of infantile and adolescent sexuality by parents, teachers or government authorities has to be eliminated. In what way this prohibition can be brought about it is impossible to say today. But *the necessity for social and legal protection of infantile and adolescent sexuality can no longer be doubted.*

The best of legal measures would be worth no more than the paper they are written on unless one were clear about all the difficulties which will arise—under given conditions of politics and human structure—from the affirmation of infantile and adolescent sexuality. If parents and teachers were not wrongly brought up and were not themselves sick, and if children and adolescents could immediately be given the best educational conditions, things would be simple. Since this is not the case, two measures will be necessary at the same time:

a) The establishment, in various regions, of *model institutions for collective education*, in which well-trained, realistic, sexually

healthy educators will closely study the development of the growing generation and will solve practical problems as they arise. These model institutions will be the nuclei from which the principles of the new order will spread to society as a whole. This will be long, difficult and laborious work, but in the long run will be the only possible way of dealing with human sex structure. In addition, there should be *research institutes* where—in a different way than hitherto—the study would be undertaken of the physiology of sexuality, the prevention of psychic disturbances and the prerequisites of sexual hygiene. These institutes would no longer see their function in the collection of Indian phalluses and other sexological curiosa and in the formulation of pseudo-scientific findings which detract attention from the real facts.

b) Outside of these centers, there would be the task of preparing for a natural sex-economic regulation of sex life on a mass scale. The first principle that would have to be recognized here is that sexual life is *not* a private affair. This should not be misinterpreted in the sense that some government agency or other organization would have the right to meddle in anybody's sexual secrets. It means that the concern for the alteration of human sexual structure, for the establishment of their full sexual capacity, cannot be left to private initiative, but is a *cardinal problem of the totality of social living*.

There are some measures which could be taken without difficulty if the sexual life of the masses were not considered a matter of secondary importance. Contraceptives should be manufactured with the same care that is given to machines, under scientific supervision and with the exclusion of profiteering. The propagation of contraception as a means of fighting abortion should be made effective in a practical way.

A repetition of the catastrophic failure of the Soviet sexual revolution is unavoidable unless the room problem for adolescents and unmarried people is solved. As I know the adolescents, they will themselves gladly tackle the problem if given a chance and will not wait for measures from above.

The establishment of emergency homes for youths is a necessity. It is possible unless there is some authority who objects to them for moralistic reasons. Youth must be made to feel that they have every opportunity to build their own lives. This will not induce them to neglect their general social tasks. On the contrary, when they have a chance gradually to solve the room problem themselves, they will tackle the social tasks with all the more enthusiasm. The whole population must have the secure understanding that the government does everything possible to secure sexual happiness, without any ifs, whens and buts. The enlightenment of the masses about the harmfulness of abortion and the danger of venereal diseases will become unnecessary to the same extent to which the mass enlightenment about the value of healthy natural sexuality progresses.

If people feel that their sexual needs are really understood in a practical way they will gladly work, without compulsion. A population living in sexual happiness will be the best guarantee of general social security. It will joyfully build up its own life and defend it against reactionary dangers.

If one is to avoid "sexual chaos" and the necessity of punitive measures against homosexuality in the army and navy, one will have to tackle one of the most difficult problems of social sex-economy: *the inclusion of female youth in the life of the army and the navy*. As inconceivable as this may sound to the military specialists today: there is no other way to prevent the undermining of sexuality by army and navy life. Obviously, there is no simple solution to this problem, but the principle is clear.<sup>1</sup>

Theater, film and literature should not, as was the case in the S.U., be put at the exclusive service of economic problems. The problems of sexual life which dominate most of the world's literature and films cannot be eliminated from the face of the earth by the glorification of machines and of production. But the reactionary, patriarchal treatment of sexual problems in lit-

---

<sup>1</sup> Translator's note: Cf. "A sex-economic prediction come true." *International Journal of Sex-economy and Orgone-Research* 3, 1944, 80.—T.P.W.

crature and films and the cheap sentimentality should be replaced by progressive, rational treatment.

The general work in the sexological field should not be left to untrained physicians and idealistic frigid women but, like any other kind of social endeavor, should be collectively organized and handled in an unbureaucratic fashion. There would be no use in racking one's brains about the details of such organization. The question of organization will solve itself spontaneously once the sex life of the masses becomes a primary concern of social endeavor.

In no instance should the new regulation of sexual life be decreed by some central agency. A farflung network of sexological organizations should maintain the contact between the masses and the professionally trained centers; as in the instruction evenings of the Sexpol in Germany, these organizations would bring up the problems from mass life for discussion and would return to their field work with whatever answers could be worked out. The responsible scientists and leaders would have to be scrutinized as to their sexual health and freedom from any ascetic and moralistic attitudes.

Religion should not be fought, but any interference with the right to carry the findings of natural science to the masses and with the attempts to secure their sexual happiness, should not be tolerated. Then it would soon be apparent whether the church is right in its contention of the supernatural origin of religious feelings. However, children and adolescents should at all times be rigidly protected against the implanting of sexual anxiety and sexual guilt feelings.

In the process of the social revolution the old form of the family will inevitably disintegrate. The family feelings and attachments of the masses, which nevertheless continue to exist, must be taken into account through ever-repeated public discussion of the problems as they come up. The sex-economic standpoint is the following:

The vegetative life of man which he shares with all living

nature, causes him to strive for development, activity and pleasure and to avoid unpleasure. This vegetative life is experienced in the form of a sensation of currents which urge for action. These sensations are at the core of every progressive, that is, revolutionary ideology. The so-called "religious experience" and the "oceanic feeling," also, are based on vegetative phenomena. Only recently, it has been possible to demonstrate that vegetative excitation is based on a bio-electrical charge of the tissues.

The religious feeling of unity with the universe, then, is based on natural facts. But the mystification of the natural vegetative sensations has resulted in their dulling. Primitive Christianity was basically a communist movement. Its life-affirmative power became converted, by simultaneous sex-negation, into the ascetic and supernatural. By taking the form of the church, Christianity, which was striving for the delivery of humanity, denied its own origin. The church owes its power to the life-negating human structure which results from a metaphysical interpretation of life: it thrives on the life which it kills.

Marxist economic theory demonstrated the economic prerequisites of a progressive life. But its limitation by purely economic and mechanistic concepts led to a dangerous swing in the direction of life-negation with all its well-known signs. In these years of heavy political struggles, this economism failed because the comprehension of the vegetative will to life was condemned as "psychology" and left to the mystics.

In the neopaganism of German National Socialism vegetative life broke through again. The vegetative pulsation was better comprehended by the fascist ideology than by the church and was taken out of the realm of the supernatural. From that point of view, the National Socialist mysticism of the "surging of the blood" and the "closeness to blood and soil" was a progress as compared with the Christian concept of original sin; however, it was again smothered in mystification and reactionary politics. Thus, life-affirmation turns again to life-negation in the form of ascetic ideologies of self-sacrifice, of serfdom and duty. In spite of that, the teaching of original sin cannot be defended as against

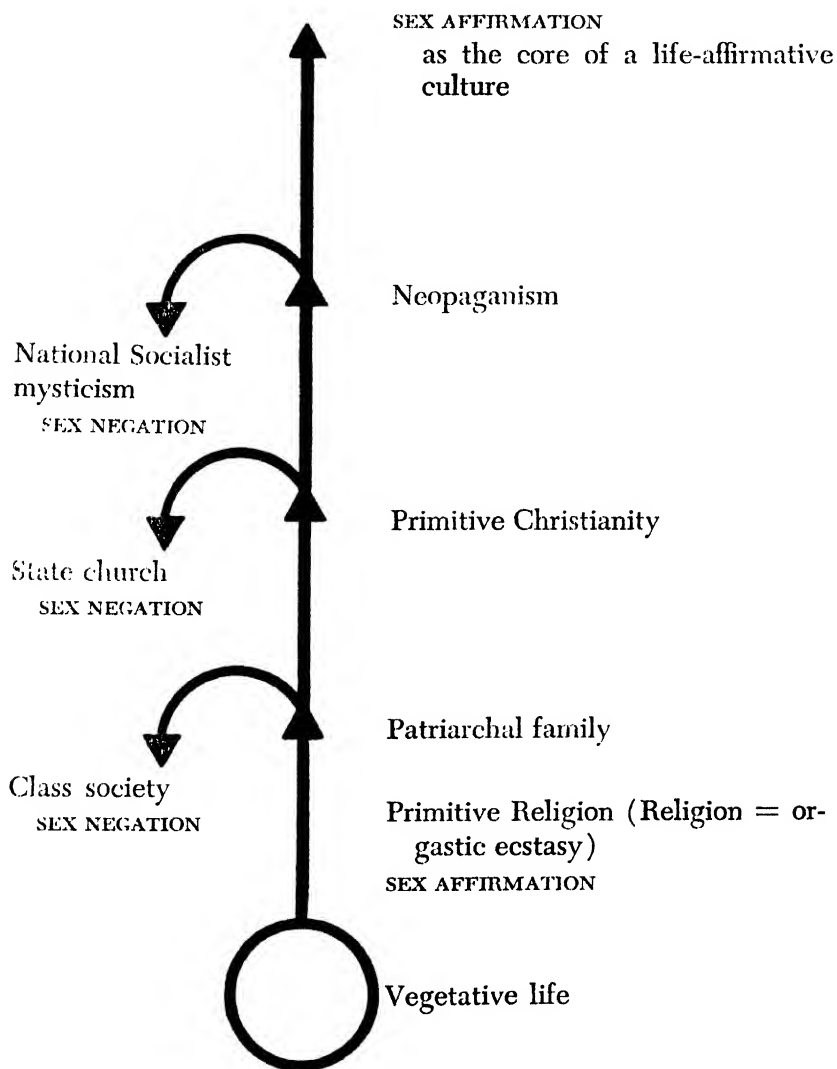


the teaching of the "surging of the blood"; the latter will have to be guided into different, positive channels.

This relationship between primitive Christianity and neopaganism leads to many misunderstandings. Some people claim that neopaganism is the revolutionary religion proper; they feel its progressive tendency but fail to see its mystical distortion. Others feel the church has to be protected against the fascist ideology and consider themselves to be acting in a revolutionary way. Many socialists state that there should be a "religious feeling"; they are right if they mean the vegetative sensations and their free development; they are wrong in that they do not comprehend the actual negation of life. Nobody dares as yet to approach the sexual core of life. Instead, unconscious sexual anxiety causes people to affirm life in the form of religious or revolutionary experience and at the same time to negate it by sex-negation. The diagram (on p. 268) illustrates the above concepts.

Sex-economy arrives at the following conclusion from its findings in natural science and from the social processes: *The affirmation of life must be aided to full development, in its subjective form of the affirmation of sexual pleasure and in its objective social form of a planned work democracy.* It must be fought for in an organized manner. Its greatest obstacle is human pleasure anxiety.

This pleasure anxiety, the result of the socially caused disturbance of the natural pleasure process, is the core of all the difficulties one encounters in mass-psychological and sexological endeavors, in the form of false modesty, moralism, blind obedience to Führers, etc. True, one is ashamed of being impotent, just as one is ashamed of being a political reactionary. Sexual potency is still the ideal, as is being revolutionary: every reactionary today plays the revolutionary. But one does not want to admit that one has missed one's chances for happiness in life and that they are gone forever. For this reason, the older generation always fights concrete affirmation of life in youth. For the same reason, youth turns conservative as it grows older. One does not want to admit that one might have arranged things better for



*Diagram of cultural development*

oneself; that one now negates what one used to affirm; that the realization of one's own wishes would require a reorganization of the total social process which would destroy so many cherished illusions and substitute gratifications. One does not want to curse the executors of the authoritarian power and of ascetic ideology because they are called "father" and "mother." So, one resigns outwardly and continues to rebel inwardly.

However, the unfolding of life cannot be arrested. It is not by accident that the social process was considered identical with the process of nature. What socialist theorists call the "historical necessity" is nothing but the actual biological necessity of the unfolding of life. Its distortion into the ascetic, authoritarian and life-negation will succeed again; but finally the natural powers in man will be victorious in *the unity of nature and culture*. All the signs indicate that life is rebelling against the oppressive forms into which it has been forced. The struggle for a "new life" is taking place, although, as is inevitable at first, mainly in the form of the most severe disorganization, material and psychic, of individual and social life. But if one understands the life process one has no reason to fear for the final outcome. A healthy individual who has enough to eat does not steal. An individual who is sexually happy does not need an inhibiting "morality" or a supernatural "religious experience." Basically, life is as simple as that. It becomes complicated only by the human structure which is characterized by the fear of life.

## INDEX

- Abortion**, 30, 36f., 196ff.  
**Adolescent**  
     sex life, actuality of, 86ff.  
     sexual intercourse, 111ff.  
     two types of, 83f.  
**Adultery**, 35  
**ALEXANDER**, G. G. L., 181  
**Armor**, 4  
**Athletics**, 88f., 105  
**"Authorities" in sexology**, 45, 261  
  
**BARASH**, M., 101 n.  
**BATKIS**, 33 n., 183  
**BENDER**, KLARA, 199  
**BENDERSKAYA**, 203  
**Biologism**, 17, 51  
**Birth rate**, 36, 197f.  
**BLOCH**, 138f.  
**BRUPBACHER**, FRITZ, 33, 106  
**BRYK**, 35 n.  
  
**"Chaos,"** 194  
**Clan**, 161f.  
**Coeducation**, 251  
**Compulsive marriage**, 129ff.  
**Contraception**, 37f., 196ff., 263  
  
**Delinquency**, 94ff., 253ff.  
**"Desexualization,"** 205f.  
**Deutscher Bund für Mutterschutz und Sexualreform**, 52f.  
**Divorce**, 57, 133ff., 146, 166  
**Double sexual morality**, 35, 58, 143  
**Dulling of sexual desire**, 122ff.  
**DZERJINSKY**, 221  
  
**Education**  
     for marriage, 57  
     sham-revolutionary, 247ff.  
**ENGELS**, 46, 180  
**Equality of sexes**, 57, 166  
  
**Faithfulness**, 142  
     based on conscience, 125  
     based on gratification, 144  
**Family**, authoritarian, 71ff.  
     abolition of the, 157ff.  
     goal of education, 74  
     political function, 79  
     sexual ideology, 73ff.  
     triangle structure, 75ff.  
**Female youth in army and navy**, 264  
**FINKOVSKY**, 173  
**FISCHER**, LOUIS, 176f.  
**FISCHER**, RUTH, 180  
**Fixation to parental home**, 75ff., 158ff., 225, 227ff.  
**FOREL**, AUGUSTE, 57ff.  
**FREUD**  
     cultural philosophy, 10ff.  
**FREUD**, ANNA, 13, 18, 244f.  
**Frigidity**, 50  
**FÜRBRINGER**, 45f.  
  
**GENSS**, 33 n.  
**GESHELENA**, 255  
**"Glass-of-water-theory,"** 187f.  
**GORKY**, 210  
**GROSS-HOFFINGER**, 138  
**GRUBER**, MAX, 34, 44ff., 107, 144

- HÄBERLIN, 145  
 HAIRE, NORMAN, 31, 60  
 HALLE, FANINA, 185, 205, 258  
 HIRSCHFELD, MAGNUS, 17, 33, 59, 208  
 HODANN, MAX, 32, 82  
 Homosexuality  
   law against, 151f.  
   reintroduction of homosexuality  
     paragraph, 208ff.  
 Honcymoon, 121  
 "Human dignity" of woman, 54f.
- Ideals  
   revolutionary *vs.* reactionary,  
     215f., 237ff.
- Ideology and economic basis, XII f.,  
 182
- "Inner discipline," 96, 184, 234
- Instinctual renunciation, 14ff.
- Jealousy, 27f., 124
- Kindergartens, 235ff.
- KOBOSEV, 171
- KOLLONTAY, ALEXANDRA, 170
- KOLNAI, 10
- KOLTSOV, 173, 210
- KOROLIOV, 199
- KOSAKOV, 171
- KRISCHE, PAUL, 50
- KRIVSKY, 206
- KULKOV, 172
- Kulturbolschewismus, 20, 21
- LAFORGUE, 10
- Lasting sexual relationship, 119ff.  
   prerequisites, 122
- LEBEDEVA, 139, 186
- Legislation  
   and psychic structure, 169f.  
   patriarchal, 165  
   progressive sexual, 164f.
- LENIN, 22, 166, 168, 180, 187ff., 212
- LEUNBACH, J. H., 60f.
- LINDSEY, BEN B., 84, 91ff., 134ff.,  
 147
- Literature  
   creating sexual anxiety, 262  
   "revolutionary," 215f.  
   "Living out," 13f., 102, 183f., 245  
   "Love techniques," 124, 145
- LYSENKO, 174
- MALINOWSKI, 35 n., 131 n.
- MARCUSE, MAX, 37f.
- Marital duty, 27
- Marital morality, 34ff.  
   and sex reform, 51ff.
- MARKOV, 172
- Marriage  
   and divorce, 133ff.  
   formal *vs.* factual 116ff.  
   "serene," 140  
   social function, 131ff.
- MARX, 154, 162, 180
- Masturbation  
   and guilt feeling, 83  
   and incest phantasies, 82  
   in adolescence, 81, 109ff.  
   infantile, 18, 245
- Matriarchy, 81, 157, 161
- MEHNERT, KLAUS, 220, 223
- Monogamy, 7, 97, 141f.
- MONTESORI, 242
- Morality, two kinds, 28
- Moral regulation, 3ff.  
   and secondary impulses, 21ff.
- MÜLLER-BRAUNSCHWEIG, 10, 15
- Neopaganism, 266f.
- "Objective, non-political" science,  
 40ff.
- Oedipus complex, 75ff.
- OLDEN, BALDER, 212f.

- PFISTER, 10  
 Pleasure anxiety, 104, 267  
 PLOSS-BARTELS, 35 n., 81 n.  
 Premarital chastity, 35ff., 42f., 100ff., 143f.  
 Prostitution, 35, 57, 95, 98  
 "Prostitution phantasies," 140f.  
 Psychoanalysis, sociological consequences, 10ff.  
  
 Reactive love, 119, 124  
 "Reality principle," 19, 141, 246  
 Religion, 265  
 ROHEIM, 10, 236  
  
 SALKIND, 248ff.  
 SCHMIDT, VERA, 238, 240ff.  
 Secondary impulses, 21ff.  
 Self-regulation, 3ff., 222, 225, 234, 238  
 SEMASHKO, 189  
 Sex-affirmation, 162, 217, 234, 240f., 260, 267  
 Sex counselling, 107f., 114  
 Sex-economic "morality," 25ff.  
 Sex education, 61ff., 112ff., 186  
 Sexology, conservative, 40ff.  
 Sexual abstinence, 41, 80ff.  
     appearance of, 86  
     and culture, 85  
     and venereal disease, 36, 43, 45f.  
     in puberty, 103ff.  
 Sexual atrophy, 48  
 Sexual reform, 30ff., 144f.  
  
 Sexual repression and culture, 10ff.  
 Sexuality  
     and ethics, 40, 58  
     and procreation, 37, 51, 207, 232  
 SHINKA, 203  
 SMIDOVITCH, 188f.  
 Social demand and sexual reality, 84ff.  
 SPIELREIN, 238  
 STÖCKER, HELENE, 51  
 STROGANOV, 206  
 Structure formation, 176, 215, 232ff.  
 Sublimation, 12ff., 19, 65, 85, 244  
  
 TIMERDING, 40, 42, 49  
 TROTSKY, 159, 170, 180  
 TSEITLIN, 173  
  
 VAILLANT-COUTURIER, P., 178  
 VAN DE VELDE, 39, 145  
  
 WESTERMARK, 130  
 WIESE, 41f.  
 WOLFF, 33  
 WOLFSOHN, 33 n.  
 World League for Sexual Reform, 59ff.  
  
 YEFIMOV, 202  
 Youth communes, 212ff.  
  
 ZELINSKY, 201f.  
 ZELTSKY, 203  
 ZETKIN, KLARA, 209

लाल बहादुर शास्त्री राष्ट्रीय प्रशासन अकादमी, पुस्तकालय  
*L.B.S. National Academy of Administration, Library*

मुसूरी  
MUSSOORIE

100507

यह पुस्तक निम्नांकित तारीख तक वापिस करनी है ।

This book is to be returned on the date last stamped

दिनांक Date	उधारकर्ता की संख्या Borrower's No.	दिनांक Date	उधारकर्ता की संख्या Borrower's No.

GL 176  
REI



176  
Rei

अवाप्ति सं० 100507  
ACC. No. ~~20560~~

वर्ग सं. पुस्तक सं.  
Class No..... Book No.....  
लेखक  
Author Reich, W.

176  
Rei

20564

LIBRARY 100507

LAL BHADUR SHASTRI

National Academy of Administration  
MUSSOORIE

Accession No. \_\_\_\_\_

1. Books are issued for 15 days only but may have to be recalled earlier if urgently required.
2. An over-due charge of 25 Paise per day per volume will be charged.
3. Books may be renewed on request, at the discretion of the Librarian.
4. Periodicals, Rare and Reference books may not be issued and may be consulted only in the Library.
5. Books lost, defaced or injured in any way shall have to be replaced or its double value shall be paid.



176  
Rei

अवाप्ति सं० 100507  
ACC. No. 20560

वर्ग सं. पुस्तक सं.  
Class No. Book No.  
लेखक  
Author Reich, W.

176  
Rei

20564

LIBRARY 100507

LAL BHADUR SHASTRI

National Academy of Administration  
MUSSOORIE

Accession No. \_\_\_\_\_

1. Books are issued for 15 days only but may have to be recalled earlier if urgently required.
2. An over-due charge of 25 Paise per day per volume will be charged.
3. Books may be renewed on request, at the discretion of the Librarian.
4. Periodicals, Rare and Reference books may not be issued and may be consulted only in the Library.
5. Books lost, defaced or injured in any way shall have to be replaced or its double value shall be paid.

176  
Rei

अवाप्ति सं० 100507  
ACC. No. ~~20560~~

वर्ग सं. पुस्तक सं.  
Class No..... Book No.....  
लेखक  
Author Reich, W.

176  
Rei

20564

LIBRARY 100507

LAL BHADUR SHASTRI

National Academy of Administration  
MUSSOORIE

Accession No. \_\_\_\_\_

1. Books are issued for 15 days only but may have to be recalled earlier if urgently required.
2. An over-due charge of 25 Paise per day per volume will be charged.
3. Books may be renewed on request, at the discretion of the Librarian.
4. Periodicals, Rare and Reference books may not be issued and may be consulted only in the Library.
5. Books lost, defaced or injured in any way shall have to be replaced or its double value shall be paid.

176  
Rei

अवाप्ति सं० 100507  
ACC. No. ~~20560~~

वर्ग सं. पुस्तक सं.  
Class No..... Book No.....  
लेखक  
Author Reich, W.

176  
Rei

20564

LIBRARY 100507

LAL BHADUR SHASTRI

National Academy of Administration  
MUSSOORIE

Accession No. \_\_\_\_\_

1. Books are issued for 15 days only but may have to be recalled earlier if urgently required.
2. An over-due charge of 25 Paise per day per volume will be charged.
3. Books may be renewed on request, at the discretion of the Librarian.
4. Periodicals, Rare and Reference books may not be issued and may be consulted only in the Library.
5. Books lost, defaced or injured in any way shall have to be replaced or its double value shall be paid.

176  
Rei

अवाप्ति सं० 100507  
ACC. No. ~~20560~~

वर्ग सं. पुस्तक सं.  
Class No..... Book No.....  
लेखक  
Author Reich, W.

176  
Rei

20564

LIBRARY 100507

LAL BHADUR SHASTRI

National Academy of Administration  
MUSSOORIE

Accession No. \_\_\_\_\_

1. Books are issued for 15 days only but may have to be recalled earlier if urgently required.
2. An over-due charge of 25 Paise per day per volume will be charged.
3. Books may be renewed on request, at the discretion of the Librarian.
4. Periodicals, Rare and Reference books may not be issued and may be consulted only in the Library.
5. Books lost, defaced or injured in any way shall have to be replaced or its double value shall be paid.